

UNIVERSITY
OF PITTSBURGH
LIBRARY



Dar.Rm.
BF1251
C188

THIS BOOK PRESENTED BY

Buhl Foundation

951

PITTSBURGH AND ALLEGHENY
SPIRIT RAPPINGS,

TOGETHER WITH A

G E N E R A L H I S T O R Y

OF

SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the United States;

BY

DR. J. B. CAMPBELL.

~~~~~  
It is a beautiful belief  
That ever round our head,  
Are hovering on noiseless wing,  
The spirits of the dead.  
~~~~~

ALLEGHENY, PA.,

PRINTED BY PURVIANCE & CO.,

JULY, 1851.

2/9-3

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.

P R E F A C E.

CANDID READER :

In appearing before you for the first time, in a matter so new, so strange, and yet of so much importance—feeling that I have a duty to perform of no ordinary character, and being aware that the thunder-bolts of ignorance, superstition, and incensed priestcraft, will be hurled at my luckless head, while the epithets of infidel impostor and money grasper, will be used by those who listen to nothing but what their ancestors believed in, whose zeal for their own particular creeds cause them to shut their eyes to all candid investigation.

But we are convinced that we are right, therefore we will, by the help of an ever guiding Providence, and the encouragement of numerous friends, backed by the opinions and researches of all scientific men who have given the subject a fair investigation.

Seeing then, that we have the men of improvement and progress on our side, and feeling an inward consciousness of right, we, therefore, unawed by the sneers and scoffs of the would be wise, undertake the arduous task with cheerfulness—leaning, however, upon the solid, sublime and Omnipotent grandeur of everlasting truth.

We know that we will meet with opposition, and we know from whence it will come; but we care not for them, they possess the spirit that burned in chains a Jerome and a Huss, and that bound a Rogers to the stake—that prompted Christian Puritans to hang Quakers, and whip Baptists, because they did not believe as they did. That same spirit would revive the inquisition with all its horrors. This class are always ready to denounce any new discovery that will conflict with their own self-conceited and narrow contracted views. It was so when Gallileo discovered the earth's revolution on its axis, and when Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, and when Dr. Jenner invented the present mode of vaccination. This same spirit of proscription, has been still manifested step by step down to the present day. It has opposed and sneered at the application of steam power by Fulton, and continues to scoff at the brilliant science of phrenology, that is now spreading every where with a power that can-

not be successfully resisted, with a living energy that can never die.

These men have said that the believers in spiritual communications should all be hung ; yet they claim to be the meek and lowly followers of him who returned good for evil, and exclaimed with his dying breath "Father, forgive them ; they know not what they do." These we do not expect to convince, nor are we aware that they would make very valuable converts if we did.

There are others in community, and this class are numerous, who believe in Spiritual Communications, but are too much afraid of popular opinion to utter their convictions, or let the world have the benefit of their researches.

But as these Divine Revelations are ushering in, a new day seems to dawn. The Manifestations are spreading in many places, and bold spirits are found every where, who are not afraid to own the truth wherever found.

Knowing that "truth is mighty, and must prevail," we will, therefore continue to investigate this subject, in spite of the scoffs and sneers of brazen faced ignorance.

INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting this work to the public we are aware of the unpopularity of the subject with part of community, but we are also aware that those who cry humbug and collusion, know nothing about it — not having given the subject one sober thought in the investigation thereof; therefore, their opinions are worth nothing.

Our object in preparing a General History of Mysterious communications, is to give the reader the particulars of the matter, and an account of the Manifestations in different places all at one glance.

Several books on this subject have already been published, describing it in its particular localities, but the progress of the Manifestations, now multiplying and spreading elsewhere, require that the facts should be gathered in one book. This we will try to do, and in doing so we shall freely select from any already published work that may be necessary, in laying before the public a general history. We wish to make the history as full and authentic as possible, that the proof may be clear and positive, as the facts here related are of that nature that we cannot expect men to believe without the most positive evidence.

We have for ourselves closely and skeptically examined these Manifestations, and have come to the conclusion, that they are spiritual. We contend that the particular sounds cannot be imitated by machinery, nor the answers given, by any process other than by spirits.

We place too high an estimate upon the perfect workings of the laws of nature as set in motion by the "Great Spirit," which pervades, encompasses and governs all things, to attribute the beautiful and fast spreading fact, proving a direct influx of spiritual substances into the world, to any thing more or less than another link in the great chain of nature's laws which is but just developing itself to man. The *why* of its appearance just at this time, or the reason why it has not become more extensively known before, we are as unable to tell as we should be to tell *why* all the great discoveries in science were not made known to man at once, instead of waiting the slow development of the intellect of man, and thus prepare him for the gradual reception of the mighty changes which have taken place from the early stages of human development to the present time. As the earth was not formed in a few short years in its present state of geological developments, so man has not all at once sprang to his present state of refinement and knowledge. Gradual growth in the refining process, seems to be the universal law of nature.

As this is a subject upon which the world seems at the present time

to be bestowing an unusual amount of attention, it may not be unprofitable for the reader and ourselves to spend some little time in the examination, to see if all the strange facts related in the following pages may not be rational and possible, if not highly probable even to the most skeptical.

The great difficulty in the way of such minds as before intimated, is the great break in the chain between tangible and (to us) intangible substance. The fact that men could not, in a normal state, see the more refined substance to which we give the name *spirit*, has led the theologians to declare that there was an existence, not only intangible, but absolutely something beyond, and *entirely separate* from matter.

Men of philosophical minds, not having positive proof of spiritual existence, have discovered this glaring inconsistency, and rejected every theory offered in favor of any existence beyond the decay of the visible body. But the developments of the last few years in Clairvoyance and Psychological science, have convinced many of the skeptics in regard to future existence, that there is an identity of spirits of persons who have passed on beyond this state of existence.

In regard to the facts presented in the following pages, they will be accompanied with proof too positive and conclusive to need a word in this connection in vindication of their truth. The idea of a fraud so extensively entered into by persons whose integrity has never been impeached—without any apparent motive—with great annoyance to themselves—without compensation in a pecuniary sense, would be far more mysterious and unaccountable, than to admit it to be just what it purports. It will also be borne in mind, that in this case, those who first heard these sounds, were not only subject to all the annoyance of visitors of all kinds and classes, but they were made the subjects of ridicule, and slanders were rife against their honesty in this matter, and the grossest insinuations against their moral character. As it spread from house to house and from one neighborhood to another, the abuse of the first became somewhat modified, and it was divided on all who would not shut their eyes and ears to the fact transpiring around them. Since the public investigations that have taken place upon the subject, many have become convinced of the fact that the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, have no agency in producing them, at least to their own knowledge, and we trust that the effect of this work may be clear to all those who have been falsely accused of fraud and deception. It is with this view that many of our friends and the friends of those to whom it first appeared, have urged us to go forward with this work. If we should accomplish this, it would not be among the least of the objects for which we labor.

If there are any, who, after carefully weighing the testimony here set forth, still discredit it, let them come forward, investigate and prove to the world that it is a deception, and how it is done, and all candid men will acknowledge themselves greatly indebted thereby. If they fail in proving it to be a deception, let them give a better and more philosophical solution of the phenomena, and place the world under lasting obligations to them.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST APPEARANCES OF THE "MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS" IN
THE TOWN OF ARCADIA, WAYNE COUNTY, NEW-YORK.

"The times have been
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end ;—but now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our seats. This is more strange
Than such a murder is !"

THE first well authenticated history that we have of the sounds so unaccountable to those who have heard them, was in a house occupied by Mr. MICHAEL WEEKMAN, in a little village known by the name of Hydesville, in the town (township) of Arcadia, Wayne Co. He resided in the house for about eighteen months, and left some time in the year 1847. Mr. Weekman makes the statement in substance as follows: That one evening about the time of retiring, he heard a rapping on the outside door, and what was rather unusual for him, instead of familiarly bidding them "come in," stepped to the door and opened it. He had no doubt of finding some one who wished to come in, but, to his surprise found no one there. He went back and proceeded to undress, when, just before getting into bed, he heard another rap at the door, loud and distinct. He stepped to the door quickly and opened it, but, as before, found no one there. He stepped out and looked around, supposing that some one was imposing on him. He could discover no one, and went back into the house. After a short time he heard the rapping again, and stepped up (it being often repeated) and held on to the latch, so that he might ascertain if any one had taken that means to annoy him. The rapping was repeated, the door opened instantly, but no one was to be seen ! He states that he could feel the jar of the door very plainly when the rapping was heard. As he opened the door he sprung out and went around the house, but no one was in sight. His family were fearful to have him go out lest some one intended to harm him. It always

remained a mystery to him, and finally as the rapping did not continue at that time, passed from his mind, except when something of the same nature occurred to revive it.

They were at one time disturbed by a manifestation of a different nature, which might be thought more incredible than the former, had not facts proved, that such occurrences were common in the families where the first class of manifestations are heard. One night their little girl, then about eight years of age, was heard to scream from fright, so that the family were alarmed by her cries, and went to her assistance. This was about midnight. She told them that something like a hand had passed over her face and head; that she felt it on the bed and all over her, but did not become so much alarmed until it touched her face. It seemed cold, and so badly had she been frightened, that it was a long time before she could tell the cause of her alarm. It was several days before she could be induced to go into the same room to sleep.

All this *might* have occurred, and been only "the idle fabric of a dream;" and we should be inclined to the belief that such was the case, had we not had the most conclusive evidence that such manifestations were quite common, not only in that house, but in various other where any of these strange occurrences have happened.

We hear nothing more of Mr. Weekman being disturbed by the rapping or other manifestations, or there being any thing of the kind with that exception, until after the house was occupied by the family of Mr. JOHN D. FOX. It was reserved to that family to be the instruments of communicating to the world, or to this part of it, this most singular affair. They were the ones who first, as if by accident, found out that there was an intelligence manifested even in this rapping, which at first appeared nothing more than an annoying and unaccountable noise.

The family of Mr. Fox, were well known in the neighborhood where they resided. Mr. and Mrs. Fox were connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which they had for many years been exemplary members, and had sustained a character unimpeachable for truth and veracity. No one who knew them had the least suspicion of their honesty or truthfulness. At the time these occurrences first took place in the family, there were living with the parents three daughters, the youngest about twelve years of age.

There are, probably, few families in which such an occurrence could have taken place, where it would have created a greater degree of surprise and fear than in this one. They were entirely unacquainted with the history of any similar occurrence in the world, and brought up in the common routine of religious belief, they were, as

in fact all the world really was and still is, entirely unprepared for such a development of the power of spirits to make themselves known to us by sounds or other ways.

From the family we gather the following facts, which are in substance the same as those embodied in a pamphlet published just after the first manifestations at their house.

They moved into the house (formerly occupied by Mr. Weekman) in the early part of the month of December, 1847, and first heard the sounds in the latter part of March 1848. The sounds first appeared to be a slight knocking in one of the bed-rooms on the floor. When the rapping was heard, they felt a tremulous motion or jar on the floor, and distinctly felt it while in bed. This feeling has been observed by most persons who have examined the subject and heard the sounds. The best idea we may be able to give of the feeling, is to say that it very nearly resembles the application of a galvanic battery to whatever you stand upon. The jar seems more of that nature than that of a stroke from any tangible substance. The first time they heard it, was in the evening just after they had retired. The whole family occupied at that time the same room, and all distinctly heard the rapping. They arose and searched with a light to find the cause of the noise, which continued all the time they were searching, and near the same spot. It continued that night until they all fell asleep, which was not till nearly or quite midnight. From this time the noise continued to be heard every night.

In the evening of the 31st of March, they concluded to call in the neighbors, the noise still continuing. At this time none, of the family had ever noticed it in the day time. On the evening above alluded to (31st of March) they retired very early, as they had been disturbed and broken of their rest for several nights in vain attempts to discover from whence the sounds proceeded. They thought that this night they would not be disturbed by it, whatever it was.

Mr Fox had not retired when the sounds commenced. The girls who occupied another bed in the same room, heard the sounds and endeavored to imitate them by snapping their fingers. The attempt was first made by the youngest girl, then about 12 years old. When she made the noise with her fingers, the sounds were repeated just as many times as she made them. The sound was not like that which she made, only the number of raps. When she stopped her fingers, the sounds stopped for a short time. One of the other girls then said in sport, do what I do; count one, two, three, four, 'five, six' &c., at the same time striking one hand in the other. The same number of blows or sounds, were repeated as in the other case. As this slight manifestation of intelligence was displayed, she began to be alarmed,

and desisted from trying any more experiments. Mrs. Fox then said count ten, and there were ten distinct strokes or sounds. She then said will you tell the age of Cathy (one of the children) and it was answered by the same number of raps that she was years of age. In like manner, the age of her different children was told correctly by this unseen visitor. Mrs. Fox then asked if it was a human being that was making the noise, and if it was, to manifest it by making the same noise. There was no sound in answer to this question. She then asked if it was a spirit, and requested if it was, that it would manifest it by making two distinct sounds. As soon as she made the request, she heard the two raps as she desired. She then proceeded to inquire if it was an injured spirit and to request an answer in the same way, and the rapping was repeated. In this way it answered her until she ascertained that it purported to be the spirit of a man, and that he was murdered for his money. To the question of how old he was, there were *thirty one* distinct raps. She also ascertained by the same means that he was a married man, and had left a wife and five children; that his wife was dead, and had been dead two years.

After ascertaining so much, she asked the question: "Will the noise continue if I call in the neighbors?" The answer was by rapping in the affirmative. They then for the first time began to call in their neighbors, to help, if possible to solve this great mystery.

At first they called in their nearest neighbors, who came thinking they would have a hearty laugh at the family for being frightened; but when the first lady that came in found that the noise, whatever it might be, could tell the age of herself as well as others, and give correct answers to questions on matters of which the family of Mr. Fox was entirely ignorant, she concluded that there was something beside a subject of ridicule and laughter in those unseen but audible communications. These neighbors insisted on calling in others, who came and after investigation, were as much confounded as at first.

The family being somewhat alarmed and much fatigued, left the house for the night. The next day the excitement began to spread, and the house was filled with anxious seekers for the unknown and invisible visitor. Through that day and up to that time, there were no sounds heard in the day time.

On Sunday morning, April 2d, the noise commenced in the day time, and was heard all that day by all who could get into the house, as the crowd which came from all quarters, was much greater than the house would hold. We have heard it estimated, that at one time there were as many as five hundred people who had gathered to hear the sounds; so great was the excitement at the commencement of these strange occurrences.

On Saturday evening, there was a committee appointed to ask questions and report what the result was, and it was nothing of any importance differing from what is here related.

As a confirmation of what we have here stated, as being related to us by the family, we give the following extracts from the testimony of WILLIAM DUESLER, of Arcadia, and an immediate neighbor of Mr. Fox, at the time of the transaction. This statement was published in a pamphlet by E. E. LEWIS, Esq. of Canandaigua, New York, which contains the testimony of many persons in the neighborhood. Mr. Duesler says

"I live in this place. I moved from Cayuga County here, last October. I live within a few rods of the house in which these noises have been heard. The first I heard any thing about them, was one week ago last Friday evening, (31st day of March.) Mrs. Redfield came over to my house to get my wife to go over to Mr. Fox's. Mrs. Redfield appeared to be very much agitated. My wife wanted I should go with them, and I accordingly went. When she told us what she wanted us to go for, I laughed at her, and ridiculed the idea that there was any thing mysterious in it. I told her it was all nonsense, and that it could easily be accounted for. This was about 9 o'clock in the evening. There were some twelve or fourteen persons there when I got into the room. I went into the room and sat down on the bed. Mr. Fox asked questions, and I heard the rapping which they had spoken of, distinctly. I felt the bedstead jar when the sound was produced.

Mrs. Fox then asked if it would answer my questions if I asked any, and if so rap. It then rapped three times. I then asked if it was an injured spirit, and it rapped. I asked if it had come to hurt any one who was present, and it did not rap. I then reversed this question, and it rapped. I asked if I or my father had injured it, (as we had formerly lived in the house,) there was no noise. Upon asking the negative of these questions, the rapping was heard. I then asked if Mr. ——— (naming a person who had formerly lived in the house,) had injured it, and if so, to manifest it by rapping, and it made three knocks louder than common, and at the same time the bedstead jarred more than it had done before. I then inquired if it was murdered for money, and the knocking was heard. I then requested it to rap when I mentioned the sum of money for which it was murdered, I then asked if it was one hundred, two, three or four, and when I came to five hundred the rapping was heard. All in the room said they heard it distinctly. I then asked the question if it was five hundred dollars, and the rapping was heard.

After this, I went over and got Artemas W. Hyde to come over.

He came over. I then asked over nearly the same questions as before, and got the same answers. Mr. Redfield went after David Jewel and wife, and Mrs. Hyde also came. After they came in, I asked the same questions over, and again got the same answers. * * I then asked it to rap my age—the number of years of my age. It rapped thirty times. This is my age, and I do not think any one about here knew my age except myself and family. I then told it to rap my wife's age, and it rapped thirty times, which is her exact age; several of us counted it at the same time. I then asked it to rap A. W. Hyde's age, and it rapped thirty two, which he says is his age; he was there at the time, and counted it with the rest of us. Then Mrs. A. W. Hyde's age, and it rapped thirty one, which she said was her age; she was also there at the time. I then continued to ask it to rap the age of different persons (naming them) in the room, and it did so correctly, as they all said.

I then asked the number of children in the different families in the neighborhood, and it told them correctly in the usual way, by rapping, also the number of deaths that had taken place in the different families, and it told correctly. I then asked it to rap its own age, and it rapped thirty one times distinctly. I then asked it if it left a family and it rapped. I then asked it to rap the number of children it left, and rapped five times; then the number of girls, and it rapped three; then the number of boys, and rapped twice. Before this I had asked it if it was a man, and it answered by rapping, it was; if it was a pedler, and it rapped.

I then asked in regard to the time it was murdered, and in the usual way, by asking the different days of the week, and the different hours of the day; learned that it was murdered on Tuesday night, about 12 o'clock. The rapping was heard only when this particular time was mentioned. When it was asked if it was murdered on a Wednesday, or Thursday, or Friday night, &c. there was no rapping. I then asked if it carried any trunk, and it rapped that it did. Then how many, and it rapped once. In the same way we ascertained that it had goods in the trunk, and that ——— took them when he murdered him; and that he had a pack of goods besides.

I asked if its wife was living, and it did not rap. If she was dead, and it rapped. I then asked it to rap the number of years the wife had been dead, and it rapped twice. In the same way I ascertained that its children were now living; that they lived in this State—and after asking if in such and such county, (naming over the different counties,) at last when I asked if they lived in Orleans county, the rapping was heard, and at no other time. This was tried over several times, and the result was always the same.

I then tried to ascertain the first letters of its name by calling over the different letters of the alphabet. I commenced with A, and asked if it was the initial of its sir-name; and when I asked if it was R, the rapping commenced. We then tried all the other letters, but could get no answer by the usual rapping. I then asked if we could find out the whole name, by reading over all the letters of the alphabet, and there was no rapping. I then reversed the question, and the rapping was heard. * * * * * There were a good many more questions asked on that night by myself and others, which I do not now remember. They were all readily answered in the same way. I stayed in the house until about twelve o'clock, and then came home. Mr. Redfield and Mr. Fox stayed in the house that night.

Saturday night I went over again, about seven o'clock. The house was full of people when I got there. They said it had been rapping some time. I went into the room. It was rapping in answer to questions when I went in.

I went to asking questions, and it answered them. Some of those in the room wanted me to go out and let some one else ask the questions. I did so and came home. There were as many as three hundred people in and around the house at this time, I should think. Hiram Soverhill, Esq., and Volney Brown asked it questions while I was there, and it rapped in answer to them.

I went over again on Sunday, between one and two o'clock, P. M. I went into the cellar with several others, and had them all leave the house over our heads; and then I asked if there had been a man buried in the cellar, to manifest it by rapping, or any other noise or sign. The moment I asked the question, there was a sound like the falling of a stick about a foot long and half an inch through, on the floor in the bed-room over our heads. It did not seem to bound at all; there was but one sound. I then asked Stephen Smith to go right up and examine the room, and see if he could discover the cause of the noise. He came back and said he could discover nothing—that there was no one in the room or in that part of the house. I then asked two more questions and it rapped in the usual way. We all went up stairs and made a thorough search, but could find nothing.

I then got a knife and fork and tried to see if I could make the same noise by dropping them, but I could not. This was all I heard on Sunday. There is only one floor, or partition or thickness between the bed-room and the cellar; no place where any thing could be secreted to make the noise. When this noise was heard in the bed-room, I could feel a slight tremulous motion or jar.

* * *

On Monday night I heard this noise again,

and asked the same questions I did before, and got the same answers. This is the last time I have heard any rapping. I can in no way account for this singular noise which I and others have heard. It is a mystery to me which I am wholly unable to solve. I am willing to testify under oath, that I did not make the noises or rapping which I and others heard; that I do not know of any person who did or could have made them; that I have spent considerable time since then, in order to satisfy myself as to the cause of it, but cannot account for it on any other ground than that it is supernatural. I lived in the same house about seven years ago, and at that time never heard any noises of the kind in and about the premises. I have understood from Johnston and others, who have lived there before ———— moved there, that there were no such sounds heard there while they occupied the house. I never believed in haunted houses, or heard or saw any thing but what I could account for before; but this I cannot account for. (Signed,) WILLIAM DUESLER."

April 12, 1848.

To the same effect is the testimony of the following persons, whose certificates are published in the work alluded to, viz; John D. Fox, Walter Scotten, Elizabeth Jewell, Lorren Tenney, James Bridger, Chauncey P. Losey, Benjamin F. Clark, Elizabeth Fox, Vernelia Culver, William D. Storer, Marvin P. Losey, David S. Fox and Mary Redfield.

These are only a few selected from the immediate neighbors of Mr. Fox. The certificates of persons who have examined this matter up to this time, would swell to hundreds and thousands.

CHAPTER II.

CONTINUED HISTORY OF THE EVENTS IN WESTERN NEW-YORK.

We have heretofore spoken only of the progress of the sounds in Hydesville, in Arcadia. We left them after they had just learned enough of the matter to converse, by getting raps for an affirmative, and no sound for a negative, and a name or two spelled out by the use of the alphabet.

Like all new discoveries, this has become more perfect as it has been investigated and studied into. The mode of communication has gradually improved, until those who are most familiar with it can without difficulty get long, and *correct* communications spelled out by the alphabet.

For some time the rapping was confined to that house, although, as stated in a former chapter, the family of Mr. Fox all left the house at times. While the neighbors were testing the floor and the walls of the house, and the family entirely away from it, the sounds were heard as distinctly as ever. We wish this to be distinctly remembered, as it has often been asserted by persons ignorant of the facts, or willfully malicious, that the sounds were never heard. unless in the presence of two of the daughters of Mr. Fox. *The facts already stated are proved, show that they commenced before that family occupied the house, or lived in the neighborhood.*

Subsequently, as was the case in the Wesley family, it seemed to evince a partiality for, or manifest itself more freely in presence of the two youngest girls. Why this was so, they could not tell, nor will we at present conjecture. Up to the time of the first manifestations, none of the family had ever been magnetized.

It soon began to be heard not only in that house, but in some of the neighbors' houses also.

Part of the family went to Rochester to reside, and the same sounds were heard by the portion of the family in that city, while the part that remained in Hydesville continued to hear them there. By this time it had been discovered that the different sound, or sounds in dif-

ferent places, purported to be the spirits of different persons. Indeed the proofs pretty soon began to be plain, that they were so, or at least whatever it was, it had the power of telling the names of persons entirely unknown to the family, and often reminding them of something that took place in their own family, of which Mr. Fox's family could know nothing, unless they had the power to see through their thro'ts & all space besides, which would be much more strange than to allow it to be what it purports to be.

Not long after it began to be heard by this family in Rochester, it began to be heard in other houses in the same city, and among others, in the house of a Methodist clergyman Rev. A. H. Jarvis, where the same sounds have continued from that time to this, as they have in other places and houses.

We have received the following statement from the hand of Mr Jarvis, which we are allowed to publish:

"There are many facts which have come under my observation equally convincing of the intelligence and utility of the communications from these unseen agents, who I now believe are continually about us, and more perfectly acquainted with all our ways—and even our thoughts, than we are with each other. But the fact in reference to my friend PICKARD is what you desire. He was at my house on Friday afternoon, April 6, 1849. None of the Fox family was present. While at the tea table we had free communications on different subjects. Pickard was requested to ask questions. He desired to know who it was that would answer questions. The answer was "I am your mother MARY PICKARD." Her name or the fact of her death was not known to any of us. The next Monday evening he (Pickard) was at Mr. G—'s and tarried there over night. He there received a communication purporting to be from his mother, saying, "Your child is dead." He came immediately to my place, and said he should take the stage for home, Lockport, 60 miles distant. He left in the stage at 8 or 9, A. M. At 12 M. I returned to my house, my wife meeting me with a telegraph envelope. I broke the seal and read mentally first,—"Rochester April, 10th, 1849.

"By telegraph from Lockport,—to Rev. A. Jarvis, No. 4, West st.

"Tell Mr, Pickard, if you can find him, his child *died this morning*.—Answer.
R. MALLORY."

"I then read it to my wife, and said this is one of the best and most convincing evidences of the intelligence of those invisible agents, and then I added—God's telegraph has outdone Morse's altogether.

Yours truly,

A. H. JARVIS.

"To E. W. CAPRON, Auburn."

All who have investigated the matter to any great extent, have received the most convincing testimony. Several persons who have

(B)

carefully examined this mystery for the last two years, have kept a private journal in which they have entered many of the most singular occurrences that have come within their personal observation.—Extracts from some of these will be given in another chapter.

Soon after the first excitement in the city of Rochester, we hear of its manifesting itself in the adjoining towns, as well as in other places in the city. Among other places the sounds were heard in the house of a Deacon Hale, of the town of Greece, in Monroe county. He is a man well known, and of unimpeachable character, so far as we have been able to ascertain, and his candor and honesty as a man, or his strict adherence to the principles of the church of which he was a deacon, have not been called in question.

Another fact in relation to his experience which we deem important, is, that he had not seen or had any acquaintance with the family of Mr. Fox, or any part of them, when they commenced at his house, or since that time, and yet he gets the communications as freely as they or any one else. We are not aware that any of his family have been placed under the influence of human magnetism. The manifestations at his house have been varied and singular.

Mr. Lyman Granger, a well known citizen of Rochester, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has long been familiar with these manifestations in his own house and in various places where he has been. There is one singular fact about the manifestations to Mr. Granger, which may be related in this place. For a long time the answers could be obtained by any *two* of the family standing near each other; and there was no difference we are informed, in the freedom of the answers, or particular preference manifested to have any particular members of the family present. At length one of the daughters of Mr. Granger, was placed under the influence of magnetism and became clairvoyant. From that time none of the family could get communications unless the daughter who was magnetized was present. This is a singular fact, and one which in the present state of knowledge on this seems almost wholly inexplicable. Why the communication should leave all the family except the magnetized daughter, after they once had free conversation without her, remains to be explained.

The daughter does not require to be magnetized in order to hear them, but only to be present. There are a number of other families in Rochester who have the same manifestations, some very freely, and some only occasionally.

From Rochester and that vicinity, it began to be heard of in this city, (Auburn,) and like other places it was for a short time confined to one family.

The first of its being heard in this city was when the youngest daughter of Mr. Fox visited our boarding-house. After she returned it was heard for some time in the presence of several who heard the sounds in her presence, and in a few months spread to several families, where it has gradually grown more free. Hardly a week passes without our receiving authentic information of some new place where these occurrences have commenced. We are informed of six families in Auburn who hear more or less of the same sounds.

In almost every place where it has commenced, there has been at first but a few sounds, and generally much more faint than after it becomes more common.

It is a very common occurrence in the family and social circles to be talking of some matter connected with this strange development, or some kindred subjects, and for all in the room to hear a distinct rap—perhaps two or three—as if confirming what was said. This is generally the way it commences at new places.

It may be proper here to remark, that persons of any considerable degree of investigating powers, stand in no fear of being deceived, as the sounds have never yet been imitated, nor do we believe they can be. Persons who have heard but little of them, and who have very vivid imaginations, and large organs of wonder, may, at times, mistake some other sounds for the genuine ones, or those produced by the spirits; but a person who is not over imaginative never.

We state this as it probably will be in many cases said, that it is some visible cause that produces the sound, and that persons are deceived. We are aware that these charges have been made by persons at a distance, who have no knowledge whatever of the facts of the case.

The same sounds are heard in several places within our knowledge in towns in this vicinity. In the town of Sennett, about six miles from this city, there is a lad some twelve years of age, by the name of JOHN BEAVER, son of Harmon Beaver, who hears these sounds whenever he pleases—whether in doors or out—alone or in company. They first came to him in the night, while sleeping alone and greatly alarmed him. With him the sounds are louder, when requested, than with any person we have yet seen. At times when solicited; they will be as loud as the striking of a heavy hammer on the table, floor or fence, or wherever he may stand, or near him. The same intelligence is displayed in his case that is displayed in other places. This boy has never been under the influence of human magnetism, and has no appearance of being at all susceptible.

None of the Misses Foxes have ever been able to get these sounds when entirely alone; although they are generally produced when they

are in company with any other person, yet this boy has them when no other person is near, & holds long conversations with his unseen companion. In his presence, too, the phenomena of moving articles of furniture, touching as with a hand, &c., appears as in other cases.

A few weeks since a young lady about sixteen years of age—Miss Harriet Bebee—was in the city and was placed in a magnetic state in company with Mrs. Tamlin, the well known clairvoyant of this city. She was also a clairvoyant herself. The sounds were heard while they were in that state, and they explained what spirits made them, and *how* they made them. Every time the sounds were heard while they were in the magnetic sleep, there was a very sensible jar observed in the case of Miss Bebee, like an electric shock, and in answer to a question, she stated that at each sound she felt as if there was electricity passing over her. This was not observable when she was brought into the normal state. She resides some twenty miles from this city, and has heard the sounds at pleasure ever since her interview with Mrs. Tamlin.

Several of the persons in whose presence these sounds are heard, always receive a slight shock, so that there is a slight jar which has sometimes been so plain as to lead persons ignorant of the facts and the phenomenon, to accuse them of making it themselves. In the case of the boy in Sennett and the Misses Fox, there is no sensation felt, and no movement perceptible. The same sounds, we are assured by persons from that place and by the *Democrat* published there, are heard in SKANEATELES. We have not positive proof of the facts and make no statement in regard to it farther than the authorities here given.

These are some of the facts that have come to our knowledge and are the common property of the community from their being open and public cases. We know of numerous cases of individuals, who declare that they have often heard the same sounds, but do not wish to incur the ridicule and contempt with which they know they must be visited, if they candidly inform their friends of the facts in the case and what they know by their own experience. Or they belong to the church, and the people will not only laugh at them, but that the church, which is forever prating about the influence of spirits, or *the* spirit, will cast them out of its folds if they do not close their ears and refuse to hear, and their eyes and refuse to see any positive and tangible evidence of what they have so long been talking about with less proof. They do not feel willing to face the frowns of their individual friends, or the anathemas of an organized body which assumes it to be sinful to investigate any thing new, especially if it be of a nature to disturb some long cherished principle which they have

deemed true because they have been told so by their fathers.

We have no such fears. We have the glorious consciousness of feeling above reputation in the matter, especially if that reputation must be sustained at the expense of truth and honest convictions, and received from the vulgar crowd—rich or poor—who look only at the apparel and pocket of a man—or his professions of a particular faith in order to be entitled to a reputation from them.

We know of what we speak. We know they are facts—strange, new, and to many wonderful—and to all, as yet, in a state that defies the philosophy and theology of the world to explain away, or tell the laws by which they are governed. Knowing this, we state the facts to the world unmindful of the sneers of those who know nothing of the matter, and caring little for the criticisms of those who pretend to much wisdom in psychological knowledge, or those who with no pretensions use vulgar and malicious falsehood as the only weapons which they have at hand. We expect all to use such weapons as they have at command, and those that are in the ditch of ignorance will throw the filth thereof, and others will use weapons of different gradations ascending to their positions.

We have an other consciousness, which, without boasting, we must think contributes greatly to the freedom of thought of any who occupy it. We are conscious of being bound by no sectarian ties; we have no padlocks on our lips—no ties to bind our intellect to a particular circle of thought.

Another proof of the absence of collusion in the matter, is the fact that it is not confined to any particular dwellings, so that there is no more a "haunted house" than a haunted out doors, or a haunted side-walk, for wherever the persons who seem to be in a right condition of body to get the communication are, there you will hear the sounds, whether it be in door or out. This precludes the idea of machinery for that could not be so suddenly exchanged from one house to another, or from a house into the open air. But we will consider the objection in another place, after we have stated a few more facts which have transpired, and which are known to many individuals besides ourselves. There is undoubtedly a greater desire for facts than reasons on the subject, and yet we cannot refrain from these frequent digressions in order to show, as we go along, how utterly futile the attempts to argue it down have proved to be, and how useless the slanders of persons who try to find the truth have been. We will in the next chapter, show that in a public investigation of the matter, the seal of truth has been set on the statements of those who have privately investigated so far as the sounds and their intelligence were concerned.

CHAPTER III.

THE PUBLIC INVESTIGATION AT CORINTHIAN HALL IN THE CITY OF ROCHESTER.

Before speaking of the strange phenomenon, thought by some to be much stranger than the, rapping, or the intelligence manifested thro' the medium; we give an account of the public investigation which were gone into in the city of Rochester in November, 1849.

The first intimation that was received in regard to those investigations came from these sounds, through the use of the alphabet. Several persons were in company, trying, as usual, to gain some information in regard to the law which governs this strange communication.—While they were thus investigating, the following was spelled out by the use of the alphabet, it being part of the message or directions for those present to follow: "You all have a duty to perform. We want you to make this matter more public." As this announcement was altogether unexpected, the persons began to discuss the difficulties and remarked that the opposition and ridicule that would be heaped upon any one who should attempt to lecture on this subject would be almost overwhelming. The answer to this was, "That will be so much the better—your triumph will be the greater."

After receiving the most positive assurances from this invisible communicator that the sounds should be heard in all parts of the Hall in response to the person who should lecture—that it was best in order that slander might be silenced, and the truth established, to go forward in the matter—the persons who were designated concluded to make the attempt. It was also intimated, from the same source, that this would prepare the way for [a more general development of spiritual communication, which would take place at no distant day.

Probably the best idea of the proceedings at Rochester can be conveyed to the reader by the following brief statement drawn up and published directly after the investigations took place, in the *New York Weekly Tribune* of December 8th, 1849.

"Some two weeks since, we were in company with some persons

who were getting communications from this invisible communicator, when a message was spelled out to us to the import that the matter should be made more public—that the time had arrived for the people to investigate the whole affair—that it was a thing which will ultimately become known to all men, and that we should immediately take measures to have it investigated. The directions were then minutely given by these spirits, as they purport to be, and which we are willing to admit are, until we have as much proof to the contrary as it required to bring us to that conclusion. These directions will appear in the following history, as they were fully and strictly followed. The great object was to start investigation and clear those who had been hearing of it for the last two years from the imputation of fraud and deception.

Accordingly on the evening of November 14, a lecture was delivered in Corinthian Hall in the City of Rochester, and a full history of the rise and progress of these manifestations given. During the relation of these facts the sounds were distinctly heard by the persons in the Hall.

After the lecture, a committee was chosen by the audience, composed of the following persons—A. J. COMES, DANIEL MARSH, NATHANIEL CLARK, Esq. A. JUDSON and EDWIN JONES.

On the following evening the committee reported in substance, as follows: That without the knowledge of the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, the committee selected the Hall of the Sons of Temperance for investigation—that the sound on the floor near where the two ladies stood was heard as distinctly as at other places, and that part of the committee heard the rapping on the wall behind them—that a number of questions were asked which were answered not altogether right nor altogether wrong—that in the afternoon they went to the house of a private citizen, and while there the sounds were heard on the outside (apparently) of the front door, after they had entered, and on the door of a closet. By placing the hand upon the door, there was a sensible jar felt when the rapping was heard. One of the committee placed one of his hands upon the feet of the ladies, and the other on the floor, and though the feet were not moved, there was a distinct jar on the floor. On the pavement and on the ground the same sound was heard:—a kind of double rap, as a stroke and a rebound, were distinguishable. When the ladies were separated at a distance no sound was heard; but when a third person was interposed between them the sounds were heard.—The ladies seemed to give every opportunity to the committee to investigate the cause fully, and would submit to a thorough investigation by a committee of ladies, if desired. They all agreed that the

sounds were heard, *but they entirely failed to discover any means by which it could be done.*

After this report and some discussion on the subject, the audience selected another Committee composed of the following persons — Doctor H. H. LANGWORTHY, Hon. FREDERICK WHITTLESEY, D. C. McCALLUM, WILLIAM FISHER, of Rochester, and Hon. A. P. HASCALL, of Le Roy; At the next lecture this Committee reported that they went into the investigation at the office of Chancellor Whittlesey, and they heard the sound on the floor, on the wall, and door,—that the ladies were placed in different positions and, like the other Committee, they were wholly unable to tell from what the sound proceeded or how it was made, that Dr. Langworthy made observations with a sathscope to ascertain whether there was any movement with the lungs and found not the least difference when the sounds were made; and there was no kind of *probability or possibility of their being made by ventriloquism as some had supposed* —and they could not have been made by machinery.

This committee was composed of Dr. E. P. LANGWORTHY, Dr. J. GATES, WM. FITSHUGH, Esq. W. L. BURTIS and L. KENYON. This committee met at the rooms of Dr. Gates at the Rochester House, and appointed a committee of ladies who took the young women into a room, disrobed them, and examined their persons and clothing, to be sure there was no fixtures about them that could produce the sounds. When satisfied on this point, the Committee of Ladies tried some other experiments, and gave the young ladies the following certificate:—

When they were standing on pillows with a handkerchief tied around the bottom of their dresses, tight to their ankles, we all heard the rapping on the wall and floor distinctly.

(Signed)

MRS. STONE,

MRS. J. GATES,

MISS M. P. LAWRENCE.

In the evening, the Committee, through their Chairman, Mr. Langworthy, made a very full report of their examinations during the day. They reported they excluded all friends of the two ladies from the committee room, and had the examination only in presence of the Committee of Gentlemen and Ladies chosen by them. Notwithstanding all this precaution, these sounds were heard when the ladies stood on large *feather pillows, without shoes*, and in other various positions, both on the floor and on the wall,—that a number of questions were asked which, when answered, were generally correct. Each member of the Committee reported separately, agreeing and corroborating the first statements.

Thus, after three days of the strictest scrutiny, by means of intelligence, candor and science, were the persons in whose presence these sounds are heard, acquitted of all fraud.

On Friday evening, after the lecture, three of the Committee, viz: Hon. A. P. HASCALL, D. C. MCCALLUM, and WM. FISHER, repaired to the house of a citizen and pursued their investigations still farther. There were nearly a score of persons present. The members of the Committee wrote many questions on paper, which no person present knew the purport of, and they were answered correctly. At times they would ask *mentally*, and would receive the answers with equal correctness, and they were fully satisfied that there was *something* present manifesting intelligence beyond the persons *visible*.

One of the committee tried the experiment of standing the ladies on glass and failed to get any sounds; but the same was subsequently tried in the presence of a large number of persons, and the sounds were as loud and distinct as before, on the floor.

Such are the facts as far as public proceedings are concerned,—which is but a small part of these strange occurrences—with the Committee's report greatly condensed.

Thus the matter stands at present, and whether it is a remarkable phenomena which will pass away with the present generation, or with the persons who seem now to be the medium of this extraordinary communication, or whether it is to be the commencement of a new era of spiritual influx into the world, it is something worthy of the attention of men of candor and philosophy.

E. W. CAPRON, Auburn.

GEORGE WILLETS, Rochester.

Rochester, Nov. 22, 1849."

As one of us was present and acquainted with all the circumstances we will make some further statements in regard to the events that transpired during the week of the investigation.

Each of the Committee, after the report of their Chairman, were called upon to make a report individually, and what is unusual where any doubtful matter is under consideration, every individual agreed to all that is published in the above extract.

Some individuals of the Committee made more minute reports of questions and answers and other circumstances that came under their observation during these examinations.

One member of the first Committee stated that he asked the question—"Who is it that wishes to communicate with me?" The answer was, "your wife will talk." He evaded the answer, and gave the persons present to understand that he never had a wife. To use

his own expression when he gave his public report, he "*brow beat it down.*" He would not admit there was any truth in it, until he reported in the evening—then he stated it correctly—he *had lost his wife sometime before.*

The committee were composed of men who, on any other subject, would be trusted to investigate where life or property were at stake. We doubt if any citizen of Monroe county would refuse to submit to the justness of his cause even were he tried for life or limb, to such men as those who composed the Committees during the three days they were engaged in trying every mode to ferret out the cause of these sounds, and yet many persons persist in denouncing those who even go to hear for themselves, as fools or knaves!

We insist upon it, that those who were present at Corinthian Hall, and had a voice in the appointment of those Committees, selected from the best and most reliable men of the city of Rochester, should of all men be the last to cry humbug or collusion. They must be aware that in doing so they impeach their Committees, and indirectly accuse them of being ignoramuses and incapable of impartial investigation, or of being accessory to one of the most successful, wide-spread and long continued impositions ever palmed off on this or any other community.

When we take into consideration the facts that this matter has now been spreading for two years—that every means has been tried in private circles and Committees appointed by public meetings—that all have failed to discover any collusion—we may safely assert that in regard to the sounds merely—the following facts are established beyond dispute, viz.:—That the sounds are heard in various places and at various times—that those sounds are not made by, or under the control of any person or persons, although manifested in the presence of particular persons; and that they evince a remarkable degree of intelligence. These facts, among those who have carefully investigated, are no longer disputed.

CHAPTER IV.

FURTHER PROOF OF THE INTELLIGENCE MANIFESTED BY THESE SOUNDS.

After stating as much as we have already done, we may suppose the reader prepared to receive some of the *specimens* of the intelligence so manifested. Of course there are hundreds of proofs lost, from the fact that there is no record kept by the great mass of persons who have visited the scenes of these developments. Others are of a nature that preclude their publication, and among these are some of the most positively convincing proofs. They are of a nature which more particularly concern the families to which they have been delivered. Some of them, however, may be given.

One of the most remarkable cases of a display of foresight on the part of these sounds, (which we have good evidence of coming from departed spirits, and shall continue so to believe until better proof than has yet been presented to the contrary comes to hand,) of which we have positive proof, is the case of our friend George Willets, now a resident of the city of Rochester. He has furnished us with the following statement, which we give entire:—

“DEAR FRIEND, E. W. CAPRON,—It is with some reluctance that I furnish you with the following statement—not that I am afraid to tell the truth—but that the world, as I conceive, is not ready to receive such truths yet. *Ridicule* probably will be heaped upon me; but when I consider that it is the ignorant only who use that weapon, perhaps I can afford to stand up and say, “let the storm come.” All who know me can say whether I have been truthful from my youth up, yea or nay, and the strongest language that I can use, is to say, that the following statement is *strictly and entirely true*.

In the summer of 1848, I had concluded, from the best judgment that I could bring to my aid, that it was best for my family to remove somewhere among the wilds of the West. Accordingly, I took a tour of observation, and finding some land in Michigan that suited me better than any other, belonging to a gentleman living in Rochester, I stopped, on my return, in order, if possible, to negotiate for it.

I staid with my friend and relative ISAAC POST, and while there he told me of certain sounds being heard in the city—and that they displayed intelligence and purported to be made by ‘Spirits,’ or persons invisible to us. I was really skeptical about any such things, but at his solicitation went to examine it. The person with whom these sounds seemed to be, I never had seen or heard of before, and my friend was careful not to tell them who I was or where I had been. It seems that the question was asked whether there was any communication for me, and the direction from the sounds was, that three persons be magnetized, two of whom were present, and one was sent for from a neighboring family. I did not know the name of any persons present; and I was also certain that no one knew me. After the three persons were put in the clairvoyant state, one of them said, ‘We have got to go to Michigan.’ They all agreed that they had to go there, and on my account. They did all seem to go there, and began to describe places and things which I had seen, and at length came to a piece of land which they said was the place they came to look at. They then described the land so accurately which I had stopped in Rochesier to buy, that I began to wonder ‘who had told them.’ They all with one accord then said, ‘But he must not go there. His father says he had better not go.’ As they said this there came a loud sound close by my chair, and *I sat some distance from any other person.* They spoke much of my father, and what his mind was, and at each time that same sound was heard, and the jar distinctly felt close by myself. They then said his *Mother* thinks it is not best. As they spoke this a different sound, not quite so loud, was heard, still close by me. Then that my *Sister* said it was not best. Another and different sound still was heard. Up to this time I had not spoken a word, but found the big drops of perspiration starting from my face. I gathered courage, and thought I would dispel that illusion directly; I said ‘as you assume to know my father, and what his mind is concerning me, *perhaps* you can tell his name.’ They all seemed to look steadily for some time, then commenced and spoke slowly and deliberately these letters—WILLIAM WILLETS.’ At each letter the loud sound that I first heard was again heard and felt immediately under my feet. I never was so astonished in my life, and involuntarily said, ‘what does all this mean?’ The sounds then said, by the alphabet being called over, that they had better be awakened; and the first loud sound said, ‘I will talk with George, and tell him all about it.’ The question was for Mr. Post, myself, and a little girl 13 years old, to go by ourselves. And here I wish it distinctly understood, that all which I shall relate as obtained from those sounds was in the presence only of my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Post, myself, and

the little girl spoken of. As what follows all purported to be from my father, I will say that his name was WILLIAM WILLETS, a member of the Society of Friends, widely known at Westbury, Long Island, where he lived until nearly sixty years of age, and subsequently at Skaneateles, Onondagua county, where he died in 1841. The communication by sounds then went on to say, that it was my father that was present and talking with me, and three hours were consumed at the first interview. In saying to me what his counsel was, it always assumed to counsel and advise, but never to dictate. He said that it was not best for us to go to Michigan, and gave various reasons, among which were that we should not enjoy ourselves in a new country, and that my health would not be competent for the task of clearing up new land, and he *foresaw* if we did go, we should come back again, and would be less in number than when we went. I then asked what was best to do. The answer was, 'Come to Rochester.' I replied that I knew of no business that I could do in Rochester. The sounds said, 'I will tell thee when thee comes.' I asked if I might know now. The answer was, 'No!—I did not need any business until I came, and then he would tell me.' The sounds then said, that after a time it would be best for me to buy some land. I asked where. The sounds then spelled out the name of a man who neither one present knew, and said that he owned fifty acres of land on such a street adjoining the city and such a distance from the centre of the city, that he would sell any part. I asked the price that would be asked. The sounds were heard and counted by three of us,—one hundred and fifty times in succession—to tell us the number of dollars per acre that would be asked. The sounds said that we had better go the next day and see if this was so, and said that we should not see the man until ten o'clock, although we might look for him as early as we pleased.

In the morning I looked in the Directory and there found the name spelled out to us, and went to his residence at seven o'clock, and was informed that he was gone to a distant part of the city, and would not be home until twelve o'clock. We then went to find him, and had some difficulty to do so, but after talking with him five or six minutes, looked at the time and it *was seven minutes past ten!* This person said that he owned fifty acres on the street told us by the sounds, and said that he would sell any part. When I asked him the price he showed me a map with the price of each lot marked, and taking the number of acres, said by the sounds to be best to buy, and averaging the price, it was the price within 6-100 of a dollar per acre. I then went home to my family and pondered over these strange things. **Many were, the conflicts in my own mind, and I heard the cry from**

all quarters, 'humbug,' 'deception,' 'fraud,' but I could not believe that I wanted to deceive myself. Three months I thought of these things deeply, and *I could not go* to Michigan. I concluded if it was deception it would do the world some good to find it out. The first of December, 1848, I moved from Waterloo to Rochester. A few days after getting here the little girl spoken of came round to our house and said that the 'Spirit' had directed her to come, for what purpose she did not know; we enquired what it was, and this was the communication—'I told thee if thee would come to Rochester I would tell thee where thee could find employment; in four days from this I will tell thee; in the meantime the Anti-slavery folks are going to hold their Fair, would it not be well for thee to help them?' No one was present at this time except my wife, the little girl, and myself.—The four days went by, and again without solicitation, and without thinking the time was up, the little girl came again. The communication was, 'Apply to William Wiley, Superintendent of the Auburn and Rochester Railroad, tomorrow at 2 o'clock, at his office, for a situation, and thee will have one before this week is out.' (This was Thursday.) I was a stranger to Mr. Wiley, and I called on Mr. Post and told him the direction, and asked him if the next day he would go with me. That evening he, happening to be at the depot, enquired if Mr. Wiley was at home, and was told that he was in Boston, and by a letter just received would not be at home till Friday night. I was told by the the sounds on Wednesday to apply on Thursday at two o'clock. Thursday, at half past one, instead of going to the Railroad office, I went round to where these sounds were heard, and said—'How is this I am told to apply to William Wiley, and he is in Boston?' The sounds said, '*go to his office now, he is there.*' I called for Mr. Post and walked immediately there, and found Mr. Wiley in his office, he said that he had returned sooner than he expected to when he wrote the letter. Mr. Post said that I was a relative of his and wished employment, and Mr. Wiley replied that they were all full with abundant applications, and could give no encouragement whatever. We walked back thinking deeply, and I went where the sounds were heard again. I enquired, 'how is this, Mr. Wiley has no place for me?' The answer was, '*Thee will have a place on the cars, and will know it before the week is out.*'

On Saturday night, at dark, I met Mr. Post, and he asked if I had heard anything from Mr. Wiley. I replied, 'not a word.' At eight o'clock on that same evening Mr. Post called at my house and said that Mr. Wiley had just been at his store and said that he had a place for me, and wished me to call at his office on Monday morning. As Mr. Wiley did not tell what place I was to fill, I again asked the

sounds what it was: and they said that it was to go as Baggage Master between this place and Auburn. On Sunday morning I wrote to my friend James Truman, of Waterloo, stating that I should pass through that place on Monday following—in the capacity above stated—*before I knew from Mr. Wiley what place he wanted me to fill*, and he can probably testify to that fact. One month after I had been running on the cars, I learned that the person whose place I took had done things worthy of a dismissal, *previous to my being directed to make application, and which did not come to Mr. Wiley's notice till the day on which I received the appointment.* These things have only been known to a few friends; you and the world now have them. I have many communications, penned down at the time they were received, purporting to be from my father, all of the most elevating character, citing me to goodness, purity, and honesty of heart, and ever pointing to the endless progression of man. In conclusion, I may say that I have examined the matter attentively for one year and a half, and have had abundant opportunity to do so, and am prepared to say, although the sounds may cease to-day and never be heard again, *They have displayed a remarkable degree of intelligence, and were not made by any person visible to us.*

GEORGE WILLETS."

Thus was everything which had been told him fulfilled to the very letter. And these are only a few of the more prominent among the directions to the same individual, and by no means the whole. These are facts, and can positively be proved, with names and dates of all the parties.

The following statement is taken from the private journal of E. W. Capron:—

"On the 23d of November, 1843, I went to the city of Rochester on business. I had previously made up my mind to investigate this so-called mystery, if I should have an opportunity. In doing so, I had no doubt but what I possessed shrewdness enough to detect the trick, as I strongly suspected it to be, or discover the noise if it should be unknown to the inmates of the house.

"A friend of mine, JOHN KEDZIE, of Rochester, who I had long known as a skeptic in regard to any *such* wonders, invited me to go with him to hear it. I accepted the invitation with a feeling very far from serious apprehension of communicating with anything beyond my power to discover.

"Before I heard the sound, we seated ourselves around a table.—As soon as we got quiet, I heard a slight but distinct rapping on the floor, apparently on the under side. Although I concluded such a

sound *might* be made by machinery, I could see no possible motive in the family taking so much pains to deceive people, as they received nothing but annoyance and trouble for their pains. I proceeded to ask some questions, and they were answered freely and correctly. I asked if it would rap my age? It was done correctly. I then took my memorandum book from my pocket and *wrote* my questions, so that no person could know the nature of the questions. I would write, 'rap four times; rap one; rap seven;' and to each and every question I got a *correct answer*. I then laid aside my book and proceeded to ask similar test questions *mentally*, and as before, received correct answers.

"I could not believe that persons present had the power to discern my *thoughts* and make these sounds in answer, for the sounds have a peculiarity not easily imitated. To suppose this to be the case would be a still greater mystery. I knew they could not give those answers for there were questions answered which they could not know anything about.

"At another time, being present with ISAAC POST, of Rochester, I tried the experiment of counting in the following manner. I took several shells from a card basket on the table,—small lake shells,—closed my hand and placed it entirely out of sight, and requested as many raps as there were shells. It was done correctly. As I knew how many shells there were in my hand, I resolved to test it another way to see if there was a possibility of my *mind* having any influence in the matter. I took a handful of shells without knowing how many I took myself. Still the answers were correct. I then requested Mr. Post, who set by the table, to put his hand in the basket, take some shells, without knowing the number, and pass them into my hand, which I immediately closed and placed in a position where none could see it. The number was told as correctly as before. We continued this class of experiments for a long time without the least failure in getting correct answers."

There could be no mistaking these tests. They could not be influenced by our minds, for we did not know ourselves what the answers should be. This places a quietus on its being anything governed by the minds of those asking questions or those who hear it most freely. The proofs of getting answers, and correct ones, to mental questions, and to thoughts where questions are not asked, is as plain as even the rapping itself.

We have known several persons to be sitting around a table in conversation, and when they ceased, the signal for the alphabet would

be called for, and a sentence would be spelled like this — (naming one of the company,) thinks so and so, mentioning exactly what their thoughts were. At one time several persons were present; one wrote on a piece of paper to another, something about two other members of the company, which, though unimportant, they did not wish the others to know; but as if to convince all of their power to tell their thoughts, the signal was given for the alphabet, and the same spelled out that they had written. This has so often been the case, or similar occurrences, that it is placed beyond dispute by those who have tried the experiment of getting answers to mental questions.

While the investigations were going on in Rochester, they would give information at night what kind of men they were who were on the committee. They would say, "such a man (telling his name.) is a candid man; such a one is very skeptical and hard to convince," &c. When the investigation came on we would find that we had been told correctly about the character of the different individuals composing the committee.

At one time during the investigations, we were talking over the subject, telling how much ridicule would be heaped upon us for attempting to lay this subject before the world and have it fairly investigated, and we had this sentence spelled to us, by what purported to be the spirit of William Wille s— "Now don't get discouraged, though the path may look foggy, there is a bright cloud a little beyond. Soon the firmament will brighten, and those people who now insult and scandalize this work of the Almighty, will walk off hanging their heads and saying 'Well, we have investigated and proved naught against those insulted people; here we stand, just as ignorant as when we first heard it;' you know that in all new sciences there is always something to contend with, and when things take a turn, and you know you have conquered, thou wilt feel thou art treading on holy ground." We at first thought it strange that there should be so sudden a change from *you* to *thou*, and it was explained thus—"I made it 'holy' instead of 'haunted.'" We then knew it to be a quotation from a song called "*The Haunted Ground.*"

Not long since Rev. A. H. Jarvis, related the following to a company convened at his house, one of which was Prof. Jones, a gentleman who was then delivering a course of lectures at Rochester. He was of the 'New Church,' or Swedenborgian faith. "At one time we were getting communications from what purported to be our son, who had been dead some ten years. He requested us to sing a hymn with the title, '*Advice to seek the Lord.*' I took a Hymn Book and

was proceeding to look for the hymn, when the alphabet was called for and he spelled out 'not that.' Another was taken. Still it spelled — 'not that.' We had four hymn books in the room that we knew of, and were told that it was not in any of them. I was about going up to my library, when he spelled, 'it is in this room.' After much search the book was found behind some ornaments on the mantle-piece, which was seldom used. A hymn was found with very near the title given, and we thought it must be the one, when we were again told '*not that.*' On looking farther we found a hymn with *exactly the title named*, and sang it, while the sounds beat time." This is a most remarkable proof of the retention of memory in spirits after they escape from the body, and it was while this very fact was under discussion, that Mr. Jarvis related these facts.

We might fill these pages in recording facts similar to the above, but we trust that none will require more than is here given to prove the intelligence of the source from which these sounds emanated.

CHAPTER V.

ARE THEY GOOD OR EVIL SPIRITS?

This is the great question with those who are fully convinced that these sounds are produced by superior intelligences, and by spirits of those who have lived in this visible world, and who have been educated to be always looking for evil if there is anything new or beyond *their* bounds of investigation.

The limits of this book would be too small to convince this class that they had wrought themselves up to a degree that makes them almost *wish* for proof of some source of evil which they could lay before the world to prove a long cherished theory, and therefore incapable of receiving facts as proof. There are exceptions, (and thanks to growing intelligence, the class is fast increasing,) to this rule of persons thus educated. Many have become candid seekers after truth in spite of their early education, and will continue to investigate in spite of all the sneers and threats of the sects and parties to which they belong.

We are not about to discuss the probabilities of there being an evil power at work "in these latter days," in order that they may, if possible, "deceive the very elect." We have no such apprehensions. We are not constantly looking for evil in order to establish some darling and long cherished dogma of our own. This may be the reason why we have not been able to find so much evidence of evil in a year's candid investigation as some have found in a few minutes, and others who have not examined at all.

In looking back through the rise of various arts and sciences, and improvements in the moral world, we find almost every important discovery accredited to the—devil. Every revolution in religious opinion has the same origin. It would be a wonder, then, if this escaped the common fate of all other phenomena, inventions or discoveries which have gone before it.

In almost every instance where persons of a strong sectarian character have investigated the matter, they have soon become convinced that they are spirits, but—from the devil. Why this conclusion?—

*Why, first, because it is at variance with all their pre-conceived opinions. This is their strongest reason. Then the spirits do not talk enough about our "eternal welfare;" they give too much advice for this world and too little for the next; they do not tell people to go to church one day in the week, and spend the remainder in trying to amass wealth. True, they give some good advice about morals, but they make no threats about the consequences of vice, *only* that it will place them in a lower sphere. These are a few of the reasons brought forward as proof of the evil origin of these spirits. Some make the assertion, that in being where these sounds and other manifestations are made, they "tremble when they think how near the clutches of the devil they have been," without any reason at all other than they do not know what else it *can* be. They look for evil and suppose they have found it.

Another reason urged by this class is the fact that the manifestations do not confine themselves to church members, but seem to disregard all such sectarian rules, and treat all alike, making no distinction. This, to many, is the greatest wonder of all, and their strongest proof of evil; that many who have stood aloof from the organized bodies have been as much favored with these manifestations as those within them, and on this account they persecute those who are in the church and will not refuse to hear, or brand those who do as infidels.

But as facts are worth more than past creeds and beliefs, or present surmises and speculations, we proceed to present some things that have been spelled out to persons, and some answers that have been given, and see whether they contain more evil than good. Many of the messages spelled out to individuals have been taken by them, and we have no record of them. Others are of a nature which the persons that received would not wish us to publish. Still we shall be able to present enough to enable persons to judge in regard to the evil or good there is contained in the communications. Among the numerous incidents of intelligence, foresight, and *right* direction, is the following:—

One day as we were at the dinner table, the direction to one of the family was, "You had better go to the depot at three o'clock." Although he was not conscious of being needed there, he obeyed the direction, and found at the depot a friend with his trunk which he could not have brought alone.

At one of the first opportunities I (E. W. CAPRON,) had of investigating, I had the following proof which appeared to be anything but evil to me, although the direction was about "worldly matters."

* See Ezekiel xiv, 3, 4.

Myself and wife, and a female friend of ours, had been investigating until a late hour, nearly 12 o'clock at night, and a violent storm had sprung up. It was necessary for us to go to another part of the city, and it was so late that the public conveyances had all left their usual stand and we were at a loss how to get a conveyance for the females. The direction was, "go to the corner of the street and you will find a conveyance." I went as directed, but saw no carriage, and began to think I had been misdirected, but just as I was about turning to go back, a sleigh came up the street, and without my speaking, the driver hailed me and inquired if I wanted a conveyance. I of course took it and carried the females home.

On one occasion, a gentleman of Rochester was indebted to a woman who was in great need of the money. The spirits directed her little sister to go to such a place in the street at a certain hour in the day and she would meet the man who would pay her three dollars for her sister. The little girl did not know the man that owed the money, but she went as directed. At the appointed time she met a man who said to her, "Are you the girl that lives with Mrs. ———?" She replied in the affirmative. "Here are *three dollars* I wish you would take to her," said the man, handing her a bill, and passed on.

It may be well to remark that many times when these spirits are communicating, the alphabet will be called and some name spelled, as the one who wishes to communicate. Often it is a name that the company had not thought of. They generally deliver some useful and interesting message when such is the case. The following are questions that are frequently asked, and we give the answers as they have been spelled out. We might fill a volume with questions and answers.

Q. What is your mission to the world?

Ans. To do good. The time will come when we shall communicate universally.

Q. Of what benefit will it be to mankind?

Ans. We can reveal truths to the world—and men will become more harmonious and better prepared for the higher spheres.

Q. Some persons imagine that the spirits are evil, and that Satan is transformed into an Angel of light to deceive us. What shall we say to them?

Ans. Tell them some of their bigotry must be dispensed with before they can believe we are good spirits. Ask them why they refuse to investigate. They are not as wise as they suppose themselves to be.

Q. Can ignorant spirits rap?

Ans. Yes. (An ignorant spirit rapped, and the difference was very plain between that and the other.)

Q. Are these sounds made by rapping?

Ans. No. They are made by the will of the spirits causing a concussion of the atmosphere and making the sounds appear in any place they please.

Q. Can they make the sounds to all persons?

Ans. No. The time will come when they can.

Q. Is there some peculiar state that makes it easier to communicate with some persons than others?

Ans. Yes.

Such is a brief, faint account of theological views gleaned from this source. Its truth or fallacy will be decided upon according to the bias of individuals reading it. We have attempted to give what testimony we are in possession of, touching the matter of good and evil, truth and falsehood. We ask no one to look upon this as all infallible, for reasons before stated. Investigate with care, and if you learn more of the origin of these sounds than we have, let the world have the benefit of it.

CHAPTER VI.

BEGINNING OF THE RAPPINGS IN CINCINNATI.

Cincinnati having been generally favored with all the demonstrations strange and wonderful, all exhibitions curious or mysterious, that have visited our country, we believed, when we first heard about the "mysterious noises" in the city of Rochester, that if they were to spread at all, it would not be many months before they would be heard in the "Queen City." There was much talk in this city in reference to them, and it was reported that they had been heard many weeks previous to the period at which "manifestations" were actually made.

From all that has been said previously in these pages, and from the numerous instructive articles in the newspapers, the mass of the people understand something of the manner in which communications are made by means of *raps*: yet it may be well enough here to give a few words of explanation. The "manifestations" occur where there is what is termed a magnetic circle. Sometimes one person is a sufficient medium, sometimes several are necessary.—The *media* are persons known as clairvoyants, or impressible persons—those that come readily under magnetic influence. The sounds are given in reply to questions when an affirmative is required. Five continuous sounds are understood to be a call for the alphabet. The letters of the alphabet are repeated, and those necessary for spelling the words required to form the sentences that the spirit would "manifest," are designated by a *rap*. For instance, if George Washington were giving the communication, and he wished himself known—as the alphabet was called over, A B C D E F G, at "G" there would be a *rap*. As the letters were repeated, the next *rap* would be at "E," &c.

The only general medium for the rappings yet known in Cincinnati, is Mrs. B. G. Bushnell, a clairvoyant of considerable power, from the western part of New York. Mrs. B. had heard the "mysterious noises" before her visit to Cincinnati, and had communicated with them at Rochester, Cleveland, and other places. She visited

Cincinnati in the pursuit of her profession—making medical examinations and prescribing for diseases while in the clairvoyant state.—We heard much of her usefulness, by means of her examinations and prescriptions, before we met her, and had become very much interested in her pursuits.

On the evening of the 26th of September, 1850, we had the pleasure of meeting her in a select party, at the house of Professor J. R. Buchanan, the well known Neurologist, and Editor of *The Journal of Man*, published in this city. During the course of the evening, Mrs. B. was impressed by the Professor. She made generally accurate phrenological examinations of several gentlemen present, whom she had never seen before that evening, and who sat, during the examination, at the opposite side of the room from her. When Dr. Buchanan was about to awaken her from the clairvoyant state, she bid him stop, and entered upon a description of the appearance and character of the Dr.'s father, many years deceased. She gave a very correct description of his personal appearance, as compared with a portrait afterwards shown the company. We requested permission to ask the lady some questions. It was granted. We inquired if we had recently lost a relative. She said yes—a person heavier than we are—that he was at a distance West—that he was going farther West—that he resembled us very much—that he must be a brother, and that he died suddenly of a disease of the stomach. She described his appearance perfectly—gave the peculiarities of his mind, and stated that he was in pursuit of an object by which he had hoped to “shine in the world,”—that just before he died he expressed many regrets—and she described effects and mementos that we are positive he had with him, as perfectly as we could have done it. Her impressions of *all* the matters in reference to him, of which she spoke, were correct, so far as we can judge.

After this examination, we had several opportunities of testing Mrs. B.'s clairvoyant powers, and became convinced that, in many respects, and for many purposes, they were remarkable. During the interviews we had with Mrs. B., for clairvoyant investigations, we learned from her that the “mysterious noises” had often been made in her presence, and that she had communicated with spirits by means of them. Our curiosity being excited, we expressed a strong desire to witness the “manifestations.” On two occasions the sounds were heard by Mrs. B., in our company, but were not communicative.—The first positive “manifestations” were heard on the night of the 14th of October, at the house of a gentleman with whom Mrs. B. boarded. The only intelligible communication received at this time was—“*Your battery is not strong enough.*”

The account of this having spread to some extent, there was much speculation in regard to it, and much interest manifested to call out further demonstrations. The supposition that these rappings are "manifestations" from the spirit-world, employed for the purpose of communicating messages to mortals, having excited great interest in them, and aroused intense curiosity wherever they have been heard, it is not strange that as soon as it was reported they had been heard in Cincinnati, there was a multitude of people anxious to be among the favored who had opportunities to receive communications from friends that had passed through "the dark valley and shadow of death."

On Wednesday evening, October 16th, a number of persons had assembled for the purpose of receiving the benefit of Mrs. Bushnell's medical examinations, when the sounds were again heard. Questions were asked, and correct *rapping* replies given to a number of interrogatories, which, it is said, could not have been correctly answered by any mortal.

The report of this meeting excited intense curiosity, and the next evening a larger company assembled at the same place. A circle having been formed, the rappings commenced. Among the gentlemen of this circle were Mr. Samuel Goodin, of Goodin's building, Court street; G. W. Ball, stove-founder, of Covington, Ky; Dr. J. P. Gatchell, of the Eclectic Medical College; Mr. Anson Atwood, of Troy, N. Y; Mr. Augustus Wattles, of Rural, Ohio; Dr. Wm. Owens, of the Eclectic College; Mr. Norton, stove-dealer, on Main street, and a number of other gentlemen, together with some ladies, strangers to us.

The alphabet was called by one of the gentlemen that understood the *modus operandi* of communication, and the persons in the circle took turns in putting questions. It would not be proper to detail all the questions and replies; many of them being unimportant, and many, though perhaps important to the persons interested, are not worth public narration. When it came to Mr. Goodin's turn to interrogate the spirit, he inquired—"Is there a spirit present that will communicate with me?" *Rap.*

"Can I know what spirit replies?" *Rap.*

The alphabet was then called, and this sentence spelled:

"I am your own child."

"The youngest?" inquired Mr. Goodin. *No sound.*

"The eldest?" *Rap.*

Again the alphabet was called, and this sentence spelled—

"I love you now as well as ever."

"Do you love your mother?" *Rap.*

"Are you happy?" *Rap.*

"Are your sisters with you?" *Rap.*

"Are they happy?" *Rap.*

"Can I do anything to make you more happy?" *Rap.*

Again the alphabet was called, and this sentence spelled—

"*Be patient, and don't fret about the calomel.*"

A friend, at this communication, remarked, that "Mr. Goodin reflected on himself in reference to the child's treatment during her sickness." As if in response to this, repeated *raps* were heard.

Mr. Goodin then inquired—"Did you die in consequence of taking calomel?" *Rap.*

After some further questions and replies, of a private character, it came Mr. Augustus Wattle's turn to make interrogatories. He then inquired—"Is there a spirit present that will converse with me?"—*Rap*

"Can I know the person?" *Rap.*

"Will you spell the name?" *No sound.*

"Will you give the initials?" *Rap.*

The alphabet was called, and "*W. W.*" designated.

"Is it the spirit of my brother, Wm. Wattles?" *Rap.*

"Do you intend that I should understand that my brother, William Wattles, is dead?" *Rap.*

"Did he die in California?" *No sound.*

"Did he die near California?" *Rap.*

"Were you properly taken care of?" *Rap.*

"What disease did you die of?"

Alphabet called for by several quickly repeated *raps*, and the word "*diarrhœa*" spelled.

"When shall I hear of this in the common way?" *No sound.*

"Will it be within one year?" *Rap.*

"Will it be within nine months?" *Rap.*

"Will it be within six months?" *No sound*

A young man from Kentucky, whose name we did not learn, next had the opportunity of spiritual converse.

He inquired, "Will any spirit converse with me?" *Rap.*

Alphabet called, and the following sentences spelled:—

"*I am your mother. Do not oppose him any more. He will be married.*"

This communication excited a laugh at the young man's expense, and considerable discussion ensued, during which the *rappings* continued, as if to suggest that there were more communications to be made. The alphabet was again called, and the following sentence spelled:—

"It will all come out right."

Some one inquired "Is there any meaning in this?"

Mr. Ball replied, "Yes, there is great meaning in it to us."

Before the company dispersed, some one asked if all the spirits in the room would rap on the table. In response, there was a great number of sounds made at the same moment upon the table—some loud, some feeble, some sharp, and some prolonged.

During Friday and Saturday of this week, most of the persons that visited Mrs. Bushnell for medical consultation, heard the mysterious sounds, and many astonishing communications were given, if the testimony of respectable persons is to be credited.

On Saturday evening, October 19th, we had an opportunity of hearing these strange demonstrations, at the house of J. F. Taylor, the gentleman with whose family we make our home; a man very deeply interested in spiritual investigation, and in whose house no deception would be allowed under any circumstances.

A company had been invited to hear Mrs. B. lecture on Spiritualism. Among the persons present were Major Gano, Clerk of the Supreme Court of Cincinnati; Dr. J. S. Garretson; Dr. Wm. Owens, of the Eclectic College; Dr. Childs, of Walnut Hills; Mr. Augustus Watters; Dr. I. Wilson, Botanic Physician, and many other gentlemen whose names it is needless to mention, and also a large number of ladies.

There were three known clairvoyants in the company. While the lecture was proceeding, the sounds were heard, apparently, under the floor, near the speaker. The clairvoyant spoke of the rappings, and called them electrical vibrations, and said communications might be had from the spirit-world if a battery was formed. Inquiry being made how a battery could be formed, the reply was, "By sitting around a table."

The lecturer, with two other persons designated, seated themselves together at one corner of the table. Sounds were distinctly heard under the floor, directly beneath these persons. The alphabet was called, and the word *Cornell* spelled—the sounds occurring as the letters were spoken, in repeating the alphabet.

It was asked if it was the spirit of Mr. Cornell that communicated?
Rap.

A few unimportant questions were then asked, when a "manifestation" that startled the entire company was made; suddenly the left arm of one of the ladies at the table was drawn back with great force, as if it had been grasped between the elbow and the shoulder. Several persons undertook to relieve the arm by magnetic passes, but without effect.

The inquiry was made—"Is it the spirit of Mr. *Cornell* that affects the lady?" *Rap.*

"Will the spirit relieve her?" *No sound.*

But suddenly the arm was thrown forward, and the lady relieved.

We had been conversing with the lady during the day, in reference to the manifestations, and remarked to the company that she had said she should not believe the rappings were made by spirits unless some spirit should take hold of her. At this there were several raps near the lady, as if to signify that the spirit had made an effort to convince her.

The question was put—"Will the spirit take hold of the lady again?" *No sound.*

But the lady says that her fingers were pressed together as though a strong hand had grasped them. She describes the sensation on her arm as if it had been so vigorously grasped between the elbow and shoulder, that she was unable to open or shut her hand.

We were satisfied at the time, that this manifestation was not the effect of magnetism, as generally understood, because the muscles of the arm were not contracted—the arm was merely drawn, or pulled back, as described.

When the alphabet was again called for and repeated, these sentences were spelled:—

"I will convince you all Mrs. Bushnell will be magnetized in one minute"

Several watches were immediately on the table. Mrs. B. said she should not be magnetized, and commenced ridiculing the communication, but at the instant the minute expired, with a shock as if a dozen electric batteries had operated upon her, her eyes closed, and she became rigid. In another minute, and by another shock, her eyes opened, and the rigidity passed off instantly.

Again the alphabet being called for, the annexed sentence was spelled—*"Go home."*

After some general conversation and much speculation on the demonstrations of the evening, the company dispersed—many astonished, others *passez*, and many convinced that spirits do communicate with mortals.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the rappings were heard frequently at the house where Mrs. Bushnell stopped, and a large number of persons held conversations with the rappers. On Wednesday evening, Mrs. B. met a select circle at the house of Prof. J. R. Buchanan, and communications were received by raps from the father of Dr. Buchanan, many years deceased, and from Dr. T. V. Morrow, a few months deceased, formerly Dean of the Eclectic Medical College.

INTERVIEW WITH THE SPIRITS, AT CINCINNATI, JUNE 6, 1851.

Yesterday afternoon I had an interview with the "spirits," at the Walnut street house, accompanied by my wife, through Miss Catharine Fox as "medium." I called upon the "medium" on Thursday evening, but witnessed no manifestations of a very positive character.

We had scarcely been seated at the table on Friday evening, before the sounds were heard in quick succession. They were different in tone from those I had previously heard, but still quite unlike Mr. Burr's. As soon as the *raps* commenced, I took out my pencil to make notes, when the table moved from me at least two feet. Miss Katy Fox sat directly opposite me. I observed her very closely, and am satisfied that neither her feet or hands accomplished the "manifestations." Presently the table was pushed towards me, and then again moved towards Miss Fox. I had my eyes open—watching Miss Fox, to test Mr. Burr's rules for detecting mediums, and I am convinced that they failed in this instance.

I inquired—"Is the spirit of my brother present?" *Rap.*

"Will he give me his signal?" *Rap.*

In a moment this signal came—a "manifestation" known to none of the company except myself and wife. The raps were quite different from any that had yet been heard.

I next inquired—"Is the spirit of my sister Margaret present?"

Rap.

"Will she give me the name of the place in which she died?"

The alphabet was called, and the word "Write," spelled.

Sitting in such a position that no one could see what I wrote, I put down "Harrisburgh, Pa.,"—no sound; then I wrote "Lew—" and in an instant the sounds came very forcibly. I, of course, had then the name of the place in my mind—it being Lewiston, Pa.

I next inquired—"Shall I have any other manifestations?" I had the palm of my left hand upon the table. There came a rap on the under side of the table, immediately beneath my hand—and then succeeded a series of scratchings, that could not have been done by the medium, because she sat at the opposite side of the table from me; her feet being on the floor, and her hands on top of the table; and so also were those of the other ladies present: and the scratchings were made not more than a couple of inches from the edge of the table against which I rested. The table again moved several feet, and then succeeded the scratchings, extending from one side of the table to the other and back again, several times.

A call for the alphabet was again heard. My wife inquired if any

sprits would manifest to her. "Rap." The succeeding sentence was then spelled:—

"Let my dear child ask questions."

She then inquired "Of whom?" and "Your father," was spelled; then came this sentence in reply to a mental question: "I am with you always, and guide you from day to day."

"Are there any other spirits that will communicate with me?"

"Yes, your brother and sister."

"Will my three friends rap together?"

Instantly three raps on different parts of the table, all differing in tone and volume, were distinctly heard.

"Will my sister rap on the table?"

The request was complied with by several raps.

Then Mrs. C. reached across the table and said, "Will the raps follow my hand?" As she drew it towards her, the raps appeared at her finger's ends, and if they were produced by joints, it must have been by the knuckles, for I passed my hand after hers, and know, to my entire satisfaction, that there were vibrations upon the top of the table.

Not satisfied with these manifestations, Mrs. C. requested that the spirits move her chair while she remained sitting. In a few moments, when she had her feet from the floor upon the round, her chair was moved back at least six inches; then immediately a "rap" was heard behind her chair, as loud as if a pound weight had been dropped from a table. The location of this sound was at least ten feet from the medium. When Mrs. C. placed her feet upon the floor, after this manifestation, they were both held so firmly that she could not move them for nearly five minutes, and no medium was within a couple of yards of her. While these "manifestations" were being witnessed, the raps were frequently heard, as if in response to opinions or assertions given by some one of the company.

Mrs. C. asked if Mr. John P. Cornell was present. *Rap.* "Will he manifest himself to me?"

When she spoke this the elbow of her right arm rested upon the table. This arm was drawn across the table as far as her body would permit, at the same time her hand being in a position perpendicular to the table. I took hold of her arm and it was rigid as the limbs of persons that are magnetized. I endeavored to force her hand upon the table, that is to straighten the arm—but I had not the strength to accomplish it.

Subsequent to this manifestation, the spirits kept time to the music of a song that was sung, and scratchings on the table were repeatedly heard, and the table was several times moved two or three feet.

The alphabet being here called for, the following sentence was spelled:—
 "All feet from the table; sit closer."

We inquired if we should join hands. *Rap*

We complied. I took particular pains to observe whether the medium's feet, or those of the ladies with her, touched the table, and I was satisfied they could not rap on it with any joints connected with flesh and blood. No questions were asked; we were all quiet, and the spirit spelled by the alphabet, "We will do all we are permitted."

Numerous raps were now heard on the table, upon the floor, on the legs of the table, upon the under side, on one of the chairs, and the scratchings were repeated while the raps were being heard with great force. Again the table was moved back and forth, and presently there was a call for the alphabet, and the word "Done" was spelled. Subsequently, John P. Cornell rapped several times, and a few questions of a private character were asked, when the sitting was ended.

The table upon which these manifestations were made was a common card table, with four legs; there was no machinery about it. The scratchings were made, as before observed, from one side to the other, without the slightest interruption on account of the pieces, running across the under side, forming a complete box. If human hands, or machinery, had given these scratchings there must necessarily have been interruptions at the places described.

I have felt it my duty to publish these manifestations, on account of their striking and positive character. I am speaking within bounds when I say there were at least one thousand raps during the sitting, answering questions promptly whether mental or vocal. In behalf of Miss Fox and the ladies accompanying her—her sister and Mrs. Kidsil, of Rochester, I must say I watched them during the whole interview with skeptical caution. They had confidence in me and were not cognizant of my intentions, unless they read them in my eyes.

I have talked with Mr. Burr, and heard him lecture, and desired to try his tests. I am satisfied whether by spirits or not, the manifestations were not produced by knuckle or joint dislocation. If the ladies can rap in concert with all the joints in their bodies simultaneously, they could not have produced, during the sitting, as many sounds as we have heard, of as many different tones, and in as many different places. There is no appearance of dishonesty about the medium or her companions. They are modest and intelligent ladies, so far as I was able to judge during the interview. Let those who heard Mr. Burr, hear the true sounds, and then decide, each one for himself, whether the exposition is satisfactory. I believe that a majority would decide that Mr. Burr's course will do no great injury to *truth*, but may be the means, finally, of enlarging the congregation of believers.

Before concluding this article, I must say a word about the occupation of the "medium," and her companions. During a portion of the time, while Mrs. C. was asking questions, the raps were most frequent, Miss Fox was

conversing with me, her sister sewing, and Mss. Kedzie was reading a newspaper, They must be remarkable women if they can attend to such business as this, and at the same time personate all the mysteries ascribed to them. It appears to me that any candid person in my place would have been convinced that neither the medium nor her coadjutors did any more of themselves to produce the sounds than the furniture of the apartment.

I am well aware that many who read this statement will cry "humbug," "delusion," and many will think, if not say, "it is all a lie." I have done my duty, and that honestly, and must suffer the consequences. I believe the time is coming when I will be justified. Until then, I can endure ridicule, and if need be, scorn. For the last six months I have had some little experience in what those who advocate heterodox opinions or theories must suffer, and confess I am somewhat hardened, for I feel that the midnight blackness is changing—that the world must soon recognize rational and consistent theories of man's second existence, based upon actual, sensuous demonstration.

WILLIAM T. COGGSHALL.

Cincinnati, June 6th, 1851.

TESTIMONY:

I was present during the interview narrated by Mr. Coggsall above, and I have no hesitation in declaring that he has given an impartial, and by no means exaggerated account of the manifestations.

E. F. NORTON.

Cincinnati, June 6th, 1851.

(c)

CHAPTER VII.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SPIRIT RAPPINGS IN PITTSBURGH.

Some time in the month of February, 1851, Mrs. Bushnell came to the city. She had acted as a medium, in New York, Cincinnati, and elsewhere, before coming here. In their sittings, at the houses of W. S. Courtney and Mr. Taylor, the spirits manifested themselves, and communications have been kept up through her, or some other medium, (as in other places mediums have multiplied,) Mrs. Bushnell having left us some time since for Cincinnati.

About the time the rappings commenced through Mrs. Bushnell, Miss Mary Cronk was discovered to be a medium, and through her and others, communications are still kept up.

Shortly after Mrs. Bushnell's arrival, and while sitting for communications, at the house of G. W. Taylor, a young lady living in the house, by the name of Christina Beail, was discovered to be a medium also. This young lady had never been under the influence of human magnetism. She appeared to be a good medium at the first. She has since then, however, been frequently magnetized, and is at present often magnetized by the invisible spirits; they use her body as giving physical force to them; or, in other words, the spirit acts on her body the same as her own spirit, when she is in a normal state; consequently, they can speak through her organ of clay the same as if they had one of their own,—an improvement on the rappings, and this improvement and progression seems to be going on everywhere, which seems to correspond well with our ideas of progression.

Eternal progression seems to be the order of things; that our course will be onward, and forever on, seems to be a self-evident fact, and agrees so well with the harmony of nature's laws, that none should doubt.

The particulars of the commencement of the rappings with Miss Christina Beail, are as follows: (this history I received from herself, as related to me in the presence of several clergymen, and others.)

She says that while living with Mrs. Tayler, and during the time that Mrs. Bushnell was there and had sittings, she (Christina) and another young lady, with some other company, were in a room, and tried to get up knockings of their own, in jest; but they did not succeed in getting very wise replies. She soon retired to her sleeping room, and then the raps came in earnest, as follows. As customary, she knelt down to address a throne of grace, and while thus kneeling the genuine raps commenced, right by her knees, jarred the floor, and almost frightened her to death; she jumped into bed. The other young ladies heard it also, and were much alarmed; finally, they gathered sufficient courage to ask it questions. They were informed by it that Christina was a medium; they also learned its name, and considerable other information. Since that time the spirits have communicated, through her, at any hour, day or night.

Thus I have given a correct account of their rise in this place. The further developments and progress of these rappings, I shall try and lay before you as I have gathered them. Some of the facts have been published through the press, and some have not. It is extremely difficult to get a regular chain of proceedings, as there has not been a full account kept: but I shall be able to give you the principal facts, though they may appear somewhat disconnected.

We give below some extracts from Pittsburgh papers, to show the state of feeling existing at that time.

Distinguished arrivals are usually announced by the press, and we deem it our duty to state that "THE SPIRITS" HAVE COME! with all their "mysterious knockings," rappings, &c., &c. The medium by which they communicate is a young German girl from a neighboring County, whose first essay was in laying the disturbed spirits in a haunted house in her neighborhood.

A number of firm believers, skeptics, &c., met at a house in this city, on Friday evening, when several of the believers formed a kind of magic circle around a table, all joining hands. The medium was mesmerized, and after repeated calls, and the darkening of the room, (by extinguishing the lights and placing a screen before the fire,) a slight tap under the table was heard, and answers made to questions—silence designating *no*, and one or more raps *yes*.

As several anxious persons were in the adjoining room, the question of admitting them was submitted to the spirits, and they decided differently in different cases—decidedly "black-balling" one lady for want of faith. After those admitted had joined the circle, numerous questions were answered by rappings, until some one suggested that the magnetized lady might be affected by the cold—so she was

turned round, with her feet (which were placed on a pillow,) to the fire, near the fender. On re-forming the circle, the raps no longer proceeded from under the table, but were on and about the fender, and on the wall at several places: but chiefly seemed located about a foot or so above the mantel. Questions were answered with rapidity; but we have no means of judging of the *accuracy* of the replies; certain it is, that no new fact in science or theology was derived. The spirits, as far as we could learn, lean towards the Swedenborgian doctrines, and evinced an opposition to the views of Fourier,—from which we conclude that they are somewhat tinctured with conservatism, in which case we shall turn them over to our neighbor of the *Gazette*!

We believe there will be some more experiments tried, which we shall endeavor to report as they occur.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.—The undersigned, having been engaged for some time anxiously investigating certain manifestations in our midst generally denominated “spiritual rappings,” believe that the cause of truth and philosophy will be advanced by laying the following statement of facts before the public. We should much rather state facts of a higher nature, (and we have many such to state) but, although perfectly convinced of them ourselves—having that interior conviction, which earnest, attentive inquiry always imparts to the mind—we fear that we cannot state them in such a manner, and with such proofs, as to force conviction into the understandings of those persons not particularly interested, and who are assailed with those *reasonable* doubts which the extraordinary character of the subject demands.

But lest it should be supposed that these revelations to us from the spirit-world have not been consoling and satisfactory, on the whole, we must state that the mass of the communications received have been of the most pure and elevating character, and that almost throughout we have felt the influence upon our hearts of the higher and holier spheres. We are satisfied we have been communing with good spirits, and faithful monitors.

As an illustration, we may state that on one occasion the spirit of Dr. Parker. (an intimate friend, while on earth, of a gentleman present,) on being asked by his friend, “What shall I do to fulfil my mission more truly on earth?” gave this response, by the alphabet, “Learn wisdom.” Then again the alphabet was called for, and this sentence spelled out: “You are doing wrong.” This had reference to a private matter, involving a question of morality, about which the spirit had previously been *mentally* interrogated. The gentleman

feels the force of the admonition, and is determined to be led by it.

To remove the slightest grounds for suspicion, we then formed a complete circle of all in the room around the table, joining hands, Mary Cronk and Mrs Bushnell being included. A case-knife was then thrown from the mantel into the middle of the floor, a distance of several yards—a book was thrown from a stand against the opposite wall, and various articles tossed about in a very strange manner; all the time a loud and muffled knocking being kept up, causing the house to shake and the table and floor to jar and tremble.

Mary Cronk, one of the *media*, was tightly grasped by an invisible hand around the ankle, and held in that position to the floor for some time, which so terrified her that she was taken out of the room in a fainting condition.

There is not in this case the slightest ground for suspicion of fraud and collusion, as our two *media* were in the circle during the last scene, with their hands tightly held. We will not for a moment suppose that the charge of imposition will be alleged against any of the others present, as they are all well known in this community—with the exception of Mr. Joseph Ketler, of New Castle, Pa., whose character can be shown to be unexceptionable. The following persons were present:—W. S. Courtney, Wm. H. Williams, (broker) Milo A. Townsend, William M'Donald, Joseph Ketler, Mrs. Courtney, Mrs. Bushnell, Mary Cronk and Caroline Cronk, all of whom are ready to testify to the facts above related.

The occurrences of this evening will long be remembered by those present, as of the most convincing character. Words cannot convey an adequate idea of the impression made upon our minds. It was a fearful revelation from the world of spirits, that cannot be mistaken, and preaches to us, in a louder voice, of the degradation consequent upon a life of evil, than a thousand sermons by the most eloquent divines. At present we know not what system of truths may spring out of these manifestations, but must say, that so far, here and elsewhere, the doctrine of eternal progression or development of all human souls, the lowest as well as the highest, seems to be taught by these spiritual instructions.

Some may suppose that the foregoing statement contradicts that idea. We think not. We wish, however, all the facts to go before the public, that they may deduce their own conclusions and form their own theories from them. It is very manifest that that these developments mean something. It is our place only to state the facts, and not to present hypotheses.

W. S. COURTLAND,
WM. M'DONALD,
MILO A. TOWNSEND.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.—A friend writes us as follows:—In a former article I undertook to present some general views of the philosophy of spiritual intercourse, and I felt at the same time a desire to refer to some communications from the spirit-world, received here and elsewhere, for the purpose of showing that there is something in the matter that could not be set aside by mere declamation, but had stopped short for fear of occupying too much of your space and time. I shall now proceed to say what I then omitted.

In the New York Tribune of a late date, (and I merely refer to this at random, having hundreds of such at hand,) an article appeared, over the signature of Charles Partridge, whose character is vouched for by Mr. Greely, from which I make the annexed quotation:—

“Raps were heard when I pointed to the name of a deceased brother, son, and cousin, while pointing to these with my hand upon a large dining table, it moved away from me eighteen inches or more. I looked around and drew it back. Presently it moved again, as before. I then got up, and upon examining the table and floor under, became convinced that no person touched it, or had anything to do with its being moved. Soon after this a terrible creaking noise commenced, like the groans and creaking of a ship, that lasted ten or twelve minutes. While this was being made, Mrs. Fish spoke and said it was an unusual sound, and she did not know what it meant. I thought it similar to the creaking of the Atlantic before its wreck on Fisher’s Island, in November, 1846, at which time I was on board of her.—This brought to my mind a lady that was then in my care, and was lost. I added her name to my list. While writing her name quite a shower of raps were heard, apparently all over the table. Mrs. Fish inquired if I knew what it meant. I replied, ‘I believe I do, but do not wish to tell you, because it will afford me a better test.’ After the noise had ceased, I asked if the spirit wishing to communicate bore the name I last wrote upon my list—it was answered by a similar shower of raps. Q. How many years is it since your death? A. Three full and one partial rap, signifying three years and a fraction—which was correct. Did it take place in the month of July, August, September, October, November—raps were made while writing November, which was right. Will you rap if I make figures signifying the day or days of the month? ‘Yes.’ I then wrote, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. Raps were made while I was writing 27 and 28, and it was correct.”

The writer of this, conversing with a spirit, had a most unequivocal

and distinct reference made to a letter, then in his pocket, which he had never shown to any one. And this was not the fancy merely, but a reference altogether unmistakable, of which I can satisfy any person who is sufficiently interested in the subject to take the trouble to call upon me.

A respectable clergyman called, on business with Mr. T. Some few persons were having a sitting, and he laughingly took his seat among the rest, having no faith in the matter, as he alleges. After having been informed by the raps that there was a spirit present ready to communicate with him, he asked, "Is it a friend?" "Yes." "A very dear friend?" "Yes." "Is it a Christian friend?" "Yes." "Is it a relative?" "No." "Is it a Christian minister?" "Yes." "Is it the Rev. Dr. ———?" The questions were all correctly answered; not all put down here only, but all that were asked. The one solitary negative in the midst of a string of affirmatives, struck the gentleman with great force. No person present had ever heard of the deceased. Many questions of a scientific nature were put, and answered correctly, and upon a branch of knowledge with which no person present was familiar, and which served completely to identify the spiritual friend; they having been in the habit of conversing much upon the same subject when they were both in this sphere.

A lady had the following conversation with a spirit. "Are you the spirit of my mother?" "Yes." "Where were you born?" "In England." "Where did you die?" "In New York." "How many children have you living?" "Three." "How many that have departed from this sphere?" "Four." "What disease did you die of?" Here a number of diseases were named, and negative responses given to all. "Was it consumption?" "Yes." "Could you read and write on earth?" "No." This was put as a complete test, as the lady avers she had never mentioned the fact to any one in Pittsburgh. At this sitting there were none present but Mrs. T., Christina, and the interrogator, and the two first had certainly no knowledge of the facts brought out thus. The lady came a skeptic, and without any intention of seeking an interview—this was purely accidental—and went away a firm believer.

The foregoing are a few among the number of similar revelations from the spirit-world, that is, those of an ordinary kind, for the higher, more impressive, and convincing ones, are private, and therefore too sacred for the public eye. I, however, deeply feel the inadequacy of verbal statements to convey correct impressions of the reality, for there are a thousand minutiae evolved in the course of these investigations, which, though impossible to be traced out by the pen are yet

in the mass entirely convincing to such as wish to receive the truth. One one occasion referred to above, where the reference was made to the letter, I was alone with Mrs. Bushnell, the medium, and used an A B C card, pointing to the letters, instead of repeating them, as is customary, and the card was held with the face turned from her, so that she could not possibly see it, and besides, she was all the time busily engaged in reading a book that she had found upon the table, and to which she was so strongly attracted that she scarcely averted her eyes during the entire sitting. In this way one half of a letter sheet was spelled out. These things, many will no doubt say, are unimportant, but I ask how are they to be explained? Let us not despise the day of small things. The mightiest growths of time are from such small seeds that vain man, with his head among the stars, cannot perceivethem. We are now in the A B C of spiritual lore, the mere rudiments, we must be patient until we progress into the higher branches. In every new department of human knowledge, how simple are the beginnings! A few unmeaning facts are collected. The ignoramus asks—"What does all this mean?" The philosopher says—"Wait awhile and you will see." After a few more revolutions of the wheel of Eternal Progression, and a few more reverberations of the "globe's rude thundering, on forever on," additional facts are brought to light, unmeaning in themselves, but the philosophers joins them to the previous ones, and, behold! these apparently dumb, unspeaking facts become the very hieroglyphics of the Celestial Kingdom, and are read off like a volume of Heavenly Truth. This is the language which Swedenborg says "involves in a few expressions more than a man can describe by some pages." It is stated by our opponent of the Visitor, that the majority of the attempts to commune with spirits, are failures, and the answers erroneous. This is utterly a mistake. From my observation, I am convinced that every person who honestly and sincerely seeks communion with spirits under circumstances at all favorable, and that condition is not hard to secure, will be gratified. I have known but few failures, where but slight attention was paid to making the conditions favorable.

[Editorial Correspondence of the Uniontown (Pa.) Democrat.]

SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.

DEAR SIR,—You say you are a believer in the spirituality of the "manifestations"—so is every free and able mind who has given

attention to the subject. For the last two months, I, with my family and friends, have been in daily and almost hourly communication with the spirits of the next sphere, through the medium, principally, of Mrs. Bushnell, though several other media are and have been in this city. You are, perhaps, aware that, previous to Mr. Austin's death, he and I had agreed that whoever should pass first into the next sphere, should find the means of corresponding with the other, and thus attest the fact of the world of spirits being inter-diffused in and among us in the natural world—instruct and assure him in and of spiritual law and life, and vouchsafe all the information and instruction on those various topics of spiritual existence, which so very deeply engaged our attention and study here, which it might be in his power to give.

About six weeks after Mr. Austin's death, I received a message from him through Mr. Sunderland's medium in Boston, to this effect: "Tell Brother Courtney I have not forgotten my promise; I will respond to him in Pittsburgh soon, without fail." About one month afterwards Mrs. Bushnell visited this city upon my invitation, then an entire stranger to her, and made my residence her home. Mr. A. says he *influenced* me to write to her; and *influenced* her, contrary to the importunate objections of all her friends in Cincinnati, contrary to all pecuniary advantages and prospects, to come here an entire stranger, in order that he might, through her, communicate with me. Her visit to Pittsburgh has been a matter of surprise to herself and all her friends. Yet it has turned out, when all is duly explained, for the advantage, spiritual and earthly, of all concerned. Hundreds have been assured of the reality of those spiritual manifestations, through the sittings at my house; and every candid mind who has sincerely sought the truth, and has had no pecuniary interests to subserve, has been fully satisfied of their truth. Nor have I yet seen a single *rational* objection come from any one who has, to any extent, investigated the phenomena.

Spirits are clairvoyant and intuitional; and when they come to a person they read over his whole memory or "Book of Life," and are cognizant of his most secret ways and thoughts, and can accurately determine his exact quality. They "search the reins and try the heart,"—they not only see his motives and purposes, his lusts, loves, schemes and machinations, but the *actions* that will be ultimately or follow from their indulgence. In this way my mind has been searched by Mr. Austin; and without even having breathed a syllable or thought to mortal, have had my states of mind spelled out to me with proper admonitions, remonstrances and instructions. So it is with others, who I have seen grow pale with fright and astonish-

ment, at the fearful revelations, &c. Moreover, our spiritual monitors and guides have been sent by us to explore the minds of others, friends or foes, just as a good clairvoyant would trace out the mind and condition of a person at a distance, and returning have kept us advised of their thoughts and intentions, whether good or bad. What is more wonderful is their *prevoyance*; for I have had the particulars and events of the following day told me the evening previous and which, in every instance, came unfailingly true.

How far into the future this prevoyant power reaches, I am unable to state, because, I have not yet experienced the future, but it has been drawn out and portrayed in living colors by visual representations made to Mrs. Bushnell in the spiritual trance, induced by Mr. Austin. When any important instruction or information was to be imparted, the dilatory and tedious process of communicating by the alphabet was superceeded, Mr. A. magnetizing Mrs. B., (a thing of daily occurrence) and inducing upon her a vision representative of the information he wished to impart,—those familiar with the visions or “Memorable Relations” of Swedenborg will understand this picture or correspondential language,—then, after thus representing it to her, and making her describe it, he would look at my mind to see if I had got an adequate idea of it, and then by means of the alphabet spell out an affirmation, correction, amendment, &c. of it, as the case might be. I have many of those representative visions, highly instructive and edifying. In order that you may have a clear idea of them, I have copied one, with the circumstances under which it was given.

One evening I had magnetized a young gentleman, at my house, with Mrs. B., in order to develop his spiritual vision, and directed his perception to Mr. Austin. He described it accurately, although he had never seen or known him, and talked with him in thought. After many other experiments, I requested him to ask Mr. Austin to make him see a vision. He said he would, and that he would make him see a vision representative of the “Frailty of Human Life.” Mr. Austin then stood before him, looking healthy, cheerful and happy. Suddenly he commenced to swell hideously, and look horrid—his face became flushed and red, choked and crimson, (representing apoplexy, of which Mr. A. died,)—his body continued to swell until it burst, when it was found full of worms eating and destroying it, during which time a beautiful bird of paradise (representing his spirit,) was seen to hover over and around the body—the worms continued eating his body until nothing was left but a dry skeleton, which soon wasted away to dust, and was blown to the four winds. On looking after the bird, he found it flying on, and on, and on, until

it entered a warm and balmy climate, and a most delightful country, when it perched and rested upon a tree bearing at once the most fragrant blossoms and the richest fruit. On looking beneath the tree he was surprised again to see Mr. Austin, looking brighter and happier than ever, and on watching him, he commenced to ascend, with others, a smooth and flowery mountain, (representing progression,) up whose fragrant ascent thousands and millions of happy spirits were slowly progressing, and now as they ascended, circle by circle, they became fewer and brighter, until they were lost to view in the distant and sunny summit. Call these dreams if you please; they are pregnant and apt with meaning, and tell or typify the reality better than mortal language, oral or printed.

Thus, in a vision, my whole life has been portrayed to me, the truth of which, of course, has to be proved by the future unrolling itself into the present.

On last Tuesday a company of us projected a visit to the Allegheny Cemetery. Mr. Austin said he would accompany us and magnetize Mrs. Bushnell in the cemetery. Mrs. Courtney has a sister buried there, from whom we have had almost daily communications, and she also said she would accompany us. Mr. A. promised to magnetize Mrs. B. at this sister's grave. When going, Mr. A. conversed with us, in the omnibus, and at my office, and when we reached the grounds. After wandering some hours through them, inspecting the monuments, &c., we neared the sister's grave, which had been purposely concealed from Mrs. B., and ascending a little rising ground, some person came up behind Mrs. B. and laid their hands upon her shoulders, and she, conceiving it was some of the company, turned suddenly round, but saw the rest of the company at a distance of eight or ten rods. She became somewhat alarmed, and found herself rapidly sinking into the mesmeric trance, when she discovered that it was Mr. A., and that here was the grave of Ellen; she saw then into all the graves and coffins; some freshly laid in them, some entirely decayed, and some only partially, old men and women, young men and infants—and upon withdrawing her vision from the graves, and directing it obliquely upwards, she saw the most indescribably beautiful scenery, and in the midst of it numberless beautiful and happy spirits, and among them Eliza, who looked with disdain down at her tomb,—and Mr. A. stood there, and pointed out to her the contrast between earth's scenery and graves, and tears, and that spiritual kingdom, of which he was then an inhabitant. I was then standing leaning against a marble slab, and Mrs. Bushnell a few feet from it, when Mr. Austin rapped successively and distinctly upon it, near my ear.

But I must draw this long letter to a close. Mrs. B. left us on last Wednesday for Cincinnati. Upon accompanying her to my office, with Mr. McDonald, Mr. Townsend, and others, Mr. Austin spelled out to me, after much affectionate greeting, "I am now at peace with all the world—I am with you always, even until death—peace be unto you—Farewell."

An arrangement, however, has been made, by which, whenever I wish to be informed of anything relating to the study and philosophy of spiritual life, I am, by an internal desire, to request Mr. A. to instruct me in this matter, when he immediately goes to Mrs. B., and impresses it upon her in a vision, or spells it out, and she mails it to me. I have no medium in the house now, although the sounds are occasionally through Mrs. C., who has been rendered somewhat susceptible to the magnetic influences, yet they appear to be involuntary or uncontrollable, and consequently cannot respond to the alphabet, though sometimes they promptly answer questions.

With regard to a medium in your town, I shall have to write you again. There are media everywhere, if the proper care was taken to develop them.

Affectionately, your obedient servant,

W. S. COURTNEY.

Pittsburgh, May 3, 1851.

STATEMENT OF SARAH W. TAYLOR.

Having had considerable experience and opportunity of examining and observing the Rappings or Spiritual Manifestations, which have taken place at my house, through the medium of Christina and Mrs. Bushnell latterly, and of Miss Mary Cronk some time since, I am able, and do make, the following statements, in regard to them, which I am willing to swear to, viz.:

It is now upwards of two months since I first heard them through the medium of Miss Cronk. In her presence they are loud, distinct, and satisfactory—made on the floor, on the table, on the mantel, on the wall, on the fender, or wherever else they are directed to be made by any one present. They would change from place to place, as desired; they are not made by her feet, because pillows have been placed under her feet, and the knocks made in answer to questions. On one occasion, she complained of cold feet, and I wrapped two warm brick rolled in a blanket, and put them under her feet, still the noises were heard. The noises have frequently been made on the mantel and wall when she was sitting in front of the fire. In regard

to Christina, my experience has been more extensive, having been acquainted with her, and until latterly, she has lived in my family several months; I, and all that know her intimately, have entire confidence in her honesty, sincerity, truthfulness and modesty. She was discovered to be a medium while living with me. Through her, during her stay in my house, we received daily communications from what we believe to be spirits. Through her, communications have been spelled out that have surprised the company, and not at all anticipated by any person present, and not at all within the knowledge of the medium, relating to things she knew nothing about, and from spirits she never heard of. Entire strangers have visited her and had communications of the most satisfactory and convincing kind, she not knowing or ever having heard of the parties. Those knocks have been made on the tables, floors, walls, of every room in the house. They are made on the walls when she is standing near it, or when she is lying in bed. They are made on the floor when she is at her work, sewing or washing, and on one occasion I had a communication spelled out on the floor near where she stood, while at the wash tub. They are made on the table while she sits off from it, not touching it, or it being touched by any person. They have been made on the floor *when her feet have been held in the lap of another lady, and while her knees were held*; they have also been made on the chair she sat on, and on the sofa, or wherever she might be they are made on the nearest object to her. A great variety of communications have been spelled out through her from a number of spirits, and tunes have been correctly rapped, so that we could recognize the tune and sing with the rapping, they keeping time. It is not morally possible that we are deceived. I have heard dozens of raps at once, and all different sounds, purporting to be from a great number of spirits present, old and young.

With regard to Mrs. Bushnell, we have frequently had communications through her, in her room, where she received visitors, and at the dinner table, from the spirits of friends, acquaintances and relations, altogether unknown to her. They have been made on the dinner table so as to jar it and all the dishes, &c., when neither she nor any one else was touching it. From my acquaintance with her I have entire confidence in her honesty, integrity, sincerity and modesty, both as a lady of superior intelligence, and also of extreme morality.

I have been to hear Mr. Burr lecture and experiment on the subject, and can safely state that the knocks made by him are not at all like those made by the spirits, differing from them in every particular. The sounds made by him are hard and concussive, but those

made by the spirits are soft and muffled, somewhat like throwing an India rubber ball against the floor or wall, and of great variety, every spirit having a different sound.

SARAH W. TAYLOR.

STATEMENT OF MRS. S. PARKER.

I have frequently visited the house of Mrs. Taylor, and had many occasions of witnessing and hearing the "spirit rappings," as they are called, made through the medium of Christina. I have through her received many communications purporting to be from the spirits of my deceased relatives and friends, that are to me entirely satisfactory. I have communications from the spirits of some of my relatives, touching matters within their knowledge and mine only, and a knowledge of which could not possibly have been attained by the medium. The noises were made on the table as loud as could be made with the knuckles, making the table jar and vibrate, and this, too, when Christina sat back from the table, without touching it, or it being touched by any person present. From my acquaintance with Christina I have full confidence in her honesty and good faith, and believe that she is altogether incapable of deceiving in this matter, and if she was, I do not think it possible for her to have done so on those occasions.

S. PARKER.

CHRISTINA'S AFFIDAVIT.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, }
City of Pittsburgh, } ss.

Personally appeared before me, an Alderman in and for the said city, Christina Beail, who, upon oath, said: That she is a medium of spiritual communications, and has been such for the last four months, during which time she has been in the daily and almost hourly habit of sitting for responses from the spirit world—that the knocks are made on the table, floor, wall, or upon the nearest object to wherever she may be—that she does *not* produce them in any way herself, nor are the communications that are frequently made, at all known to her, previously to their being made—that she does not know how they are made, unless by spirits, and that she believes they are made by spirits—that they rap on the table or wall when she is not touching them, and sitting several feet off from them—that they are made

while sitting, standing, or lying, and while engaged at work of conversing—that they rap when her hands, knees, and feet are tied or held, as has been frequently tried—that they have moved the table, chairs, &c., in her presence, when no one touched them—that scores of persons whom she never knew, have, through her medium, communicated with spirits she never knew or heard of—that her will has nothing to do with the production of the sounds, and that she cannot control them—that they come when they please and go when they please—that while Mr. Courtney was writing this statement, they were heard on the floor, on the wall, and on the table—that she has heard the raps produced by Mr. Burr, and that the raps heard in her presence are not at all like them, differing in every way—that the raps made by different spirits are different, and much louder than those made by Mr. Burr—that they have advised her to keep out of Mr. Burr's way—that he is not to be relied on.

CHRISTINA BEAIL.

Sworn and subscribed before me, this 23d May, 1851.

JOHN A. PARKINSON, Alderman.

STATEMENT OF O. S. FOWLER, PHRENOLOGIST.

FRIEND COURTNEY,—I gladly comply with your request to tell you what I know respecting the spirit rappings, and Burr's pretended exposure of them. I heard these rappings in New York, in connection with the Foxes, last summer, and have heard others this spring in Pittsburgh. I have also heard Burr's noises. The latter are no more like the former than a church bell is like a Scotch fiddle. Mr. Burr's raps are obvious cracks of the fingers or other joints, or such raps as any one can make: whereas these are inimitable. I said at first, and I repeat now, no human agency can imitate these raps, nor even machinery, for that would prevent the variety now observed.—You wish facts; I give you what I have seen and heard:—At one sitting, Christina, the medium, was sitting at least two feet from the table, and her feet at least two feet from those of the table. No other one was in the room except Mrs. Taylor, whose feet were also turned from the table, with sometimes her hand, sometimes her elbow on the table, but most of the time not touching it. I alone touched that table.

I heard the raps louder and more numerous than I had ever heard them before, sometimes in response to mental questions, sometimes to written ones. Now who made these raps? Underneath that floor

on which the table stood was nothing but dirt. I examined the table, and can swear that there was no machinery under, in, upon or about the table—can swear that no other person but myself touched it, and yet I felt its vibrations as distinctly as I ever felt any vibrations in my life.

The table vibrated with every rap,—one of my feet were on the table leg—my foot alone touched that table. These raps I did not make, and yet that table vibrated. Could Christina, sitting two feet from the table, produce these vibrations? These vibrations were not on the floor, the others were on the table's leg. If these vibrations had their origin in the floor my other foot would have felt them. Christina did not make these raps. Mrs. Taylor could not make them, nor would she if she could, for she is a true, trusty woman. I did not make them; no other living human being was in the room, and yet they were made. C. Chauncey Burr, who made them?

Besides, phrenologically considered, Christina is a perfectly honest girl. Not one head do I examine in a month with as large an organ of Conscientiousness as she possesses. Her head is that of a downright honest girl, utterly incapable, either intellectually or morally, of trickery. If such a head were to attempt tricks they would be perfectly transparent, for she has not sufficient *acuteness* to carry out a well concerted plan of deception. If Burr's conscience is half as large as Christina's, phrenologically or practically, then my eyes deceive me, for Burr has a very heavy *base* to his brain; Christina a very heavy top head.

Burr's entire lecture did not contain one iota of evidence to disprove the Rochester knockings. True he made noises, though they were utterly unlike the spirit rappings, and if they had been exact imitations, that would no more prove the non-existence of the spirit rappings than the existence of *bogus* proves the non-existence of genuine coin.

In Burr's whole manner, as I read it, there was not an open, earnest, manly investigation, and defence of truth. If he had been actuated by a sincere love of truth, and desire to propagate it, his entire manner would have been different—would have had more heart, and less attempted oratory; more actual, less apparent interest; more pathos, less bathos. His entire manner struck me as that of a special pleader, not a developer of truth. His reference to Dr. Ackley, of Cleveland, is singularly unfortunate, for Ackley is behind the age in everything, and his opposition I regard as a sure proof of truth. Let C. Chauncey Burr look out, for if this matter be from the spirit world its authors will soon take care of him.

In thus casting my influence in favor of the rappings, I do simply

what my fullest convictions of truth and duty oblige me to do. I testify, solely by a love of truth, and a willingness to sacrifice, if need be, in its behalf.

O. S. FOWLER. -

Pittsburgh, May 22, 1851.

In addition to the foregoing certificates, I am willing to testify on oath to the following facts:—That I have heard those raps made on the table, wall, door or mantel, when no one was near, or touched them. I have seen the table moved when no one touched it, and the room light enough to see all objects in it. That objects and articles had been thrown about when all in the room had joined hands.—That the knocks are made when 18 feet from the medium, or any one else. and I have been in the daily habit of getting communications spelled out at that distance, when no one was present but myself and the medium. That I have seen sentences spelled out when the medium was asleep in her chair, or engaged in reading or writing, or in conversation with others. That I have heard and felt the raps made on the top of my hat, when held in the presence of the media, and have so received communications. That the alphabet has been recited by third persons mentally and without pointing to the letter, when direct or unequivocal answers were spelled out to mental interrogatories. That communications wholly unexpected, and beyond the knowledge of the medium, have been spelled out, and purporting to be from spirits that none of the company thought of at the time. That almost all the communications that I have received have been highly intelligent and instructive, and always correctly spelled. That a word which the medium was in the habit of spelling wrongly was spelled rightly by the spirit. That ingrammaticisms of which the medium was guilty were corrected by the spirits. That matters disagreeable to the medium and the parties communicating, have been spelled out, causing all great anxiety, trouble and difficulty.—Peculiar instances of this kind, within my experience, would of themselves, beyond all doubt, settle the question of the integrity and good faith of all present.

Respectfully, yours &c.,

W. S. COURTNEY.

[We have been obliged, for want of space, to abridge Mr. Courtney's statement.]

[We give below the statement of the Rev. Samuel Williams, of Pittsburgh.]

I hereby certify, that during the month of April last, I happened in at Mr. Taylor's, on Penn street, one evening, an entire stranger to the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, Clairvoyance, Biology, &c., when a circle was being formed for the purpose of hearing rappings. Being invited to a seat, in company with some half dozen or more professing Christians, and not being disposed to run away from any scientific experiment, I concluded to witness the occurrences of the evening.

A young lady present soon passed into the magnetic sleep, and upon being touched, would reply to any questions which might be put to her. She was asked if she saw any spirits, or persons out of the body. She replied that she did, and proceeded to describe some ten persons, mostly children; some of them were children of parents present, who afterwards received responses from them by way of raps. She described an old man standing by me, who, she said, was very anxious to communicate with me. Immediately I began to cast about to see who among my deceased friends would answer her description. I soon thought of Dr. Charles Wheeler, and continued to think of him until she had passed out of the sleep, and several others had asked questions and received answers either in affirmative raps, or spelled out by the alphabet. Then I asked if the person whom the lady had seen by me were a friend of mine. A rap, loud and distinct, yet exceedingly soft, was heard about the middle of a large dining table. I next asked if he were a relative. There was no answer. Next, if he were a Christian friend? An answer came as before. A Christian minister? The rap was more loud and distinct. Then, is it Dr. Charles Wheeler? when three or four raps anticipated my expression.

Astounded at this, believing no one in the room knew Mr. Wheeler, or of his death, I paused for a minute or two, and then asked if he valued and loved the truths he formerly preached in life. A reply came as before. I then asked if he had the exalted views of the divinity of Christ which were held by most Christians. The answer was as before. I could detect no fraud in any present, nor suspect any one of dishonesty.

A few evenings after the first affair, I designedly went to witness more of what might be heard, with my mind fully convinced that the phenomena were reducible to the laws of magnetism and electricity, without particular moral character, and determined that I would ex-

ercise all vigilance to discover fraud, if any should be practised. The table was examined. The medium left the circle during part of the time, and all present seemed to be honest enquirers, and yet all vigilant to detect fraud.

On this occasion, I proceeded to ask whether the law of magnetism, so well known, called the circular form, or shoe helixes, was one of the conditions of this development. The response was in the affirmative. Whether a current of electricity could pass from mind to mind upon atmospheric conductors, and communicate ~~thought~~ independent of arbitrary language, as upon the telegraphic wires? A response in the affirmative was given. Whether time and space were not annihilated by the rapid flight of the wonderful agency, by which one mind conveys information to other minds, with whom it is intimately acquainted, or to whom affectionately united in friendship? Affirmatively answered.

One verse was sung by one of the company, the time correctly beaten by the rapping agency, and then the notes of the same tune were distinctly rapped by the agent, who professed to be Doctor Wheeler.

I asked several other questions of a scientific character, involving some of those laws above referred to, knowing he was ardent in the pursuit of that kind of knowledge when living; which were answered in the affirmative.

I make these statements as facts, which I witnessed, if I can trust my own senses.

S. WILLIAMS.

Pittsburgh, May 21, 1851.

FRIEND COURTNEY,—According to my promise, I have hastily drawn up a few facts relating to the phenomena known as "Spiritual Manifestations or Rappings," which, if added to the evidence already given to the public, may have a tendency to cause those persons who have not had an opportunity of investigating for themselves, to prove before they reject these strange (and to many unnatural) manifestations, as the result of collusion or cunningly devised tricks. My own experience, together with that of my family, have satisfied me most conclusively that the raps and other manifestations which I have heard and seen in your house, at the residence of Charles B. Taylor, on Penn street, at the houses of Mr. Savory, Mr. Walker, and elsewhere, as well as at my own dwelling, were not made by the hands, feet, knuckles, or knee joints, of any one present, and am fully convinced that it is more philosophic to impute the cause of the sounds

matters, sometimes answering by raps, sometimes using the alphabet. It was in substance as follows:

‘Spirit is the great positive of all existence, and matter the great negative. There is an elemental difference between matter and spirit. Electricity and magnetism are always connected with matter, and belong to it. *The dividing link between matter and mind is between magnetism and vitality.*

‘There are different degrees of refinement in the electrical and magnetic media. Chemical affinities are electrical and magnetic.—Cohesion and gravitation also depend on similar principles.

‘The time has not yet come when the true philosophy may be explained, but will soon. Investigation and experience will hasten it on.

‘Repulsion in nature is caused by stronger attraction. The ascension of a balloon from the earth is a fair illustration of the principle of repulsion.

‘Everything in the universe takes its appropriate place by virtue of its elemental affinities, and can occupy no other place, without changing the relation of itself and every other body in existence.

‘The earth and every other heavenly body is caused to move in its appropriate orbit by the united action of every other body in existence; and cannot be made come in contact with other bodies; for the combining influences of all the separate bodies mark out separate paths for each.

‘Thought is mental motion, and is conveyed from one mind to another through an intermediate medium, which is put in motion by this mental action. This medium, in its refinement, lies between the nervous medium and spirit, and exists in every degree of refinement, from the nervous fluid to spirit.

‘Clairvoyance consists in insulating the mind of the subject, and in proportion as the mind is brought into clear contact with the higher refinements of this medium, will the subject become clear-sighted.’”

LAMAR, ILL., May 16, 1851.

MR. SUNDERLAND.—I have seen many old things passing away; and now the wonder with me is, how they ever became established in the minds of men. And in the general passing away of old things, is the terror of the great “King of Terrors,” Death. Blessed be the God of progress, I think unbelief is growing weak, in this vicinity, respecting spiritual manifestations. The opposers are mute on the subject; and some read, and others enquire. Spirit visitations have come near us, and we have promise of more soon.

Yours, in friendship,

JOHN H. MUDGETT.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE

DUNDEE, ILL., June 24, 1851.

MR. SUNDERLAND,—*Dear Sir*: I hope you will be encouraged to continue "The Spirit World." Media are multiplying fast, here, in spite of all the unbelief that can be scared up. It is truly amusing to witness the manifestations of feeling. One says—"Well, if the Spirit World has got such a lying set of scamps in it, it is no great improvement on this, and I sha'n't want to go there."

But notwithstanding all that can be said in opposition to it by way of accounting for the rappings, whether by calling it "Electro Vol-taism," "Toeology," "Knecology," or what not, it thickens around us—pops out here and there, where least looked for.

One man here, who has blowed at it all winter, has a son recently become a medium,—the spirits rapping to him while doing up goods in a store, he being a clerk.

The trouble of it is, the most of us have formed an idea of the spirit world; and now, because that idea is not realized by the manifestations, lo, forsooth, it can't be spirits who are making these communications?

Yours, &c,

J. R. ROBINSON.

KENOSHA, Wis., June 16, 1851.

DEAR SIR,—There are some nine good mediums in this city; we are enabled to receive communications from the spiritual world. I have myself received spiritual manifestations almost every hour that I am awake, for the last two weeks. I have soul cheering promises for future developments.

Yours, respectfully,

J. S. RANDALL.

NANTUCKET, MASS., June 22, 1851.

DEAR SIR,—There are six mediums on this Island. Wonderful communications have been received, and physical force manifested which have astonished all who have witnessed it. Very many believe the manifestations to be from the spirits of departed friends.

Respectfully, yours,

PHEBE ANDREWS.

UTICA, N.Y., June 23, 1851.

FRIEND SUNDERLAND,—We are upon good terms with the spirits here. We have the "sounds," "writing," and a variety of physical manifestations. My wife has been moved while in her chair, by the spirits.

Your friend forever,

T. A. HOLT.

(E)

CHAMBERSBURG, June 2, 1856.

am pleased to learn that you are pursuing your labors, to learn and preserve the memorials of the names and incidents, of the early settlers of Pennsylvania. The public already owe you a large debt of gratitude for much historical interest, which has been rescued from oblivion by your indefatigable labors and researches in preparing and publishing copies of many of our counties. With my best wishes for your success."

I have received from the publisher a specimen of a serial publication with the above title. No one in our State, we are so well acquainted with its early history as Mr. Rupp, and he has done a good thing, collecting together the names illustrious ancestors. To their descendants it is an invaluable publication—a treasury of interesting lore—and many come its appearance. We have been repeatedly requested by friends from abroad to ascertain, if possible, when such persons came to this country, not an easy matter to do. Mr. Rupp has carefully collated these names from the lists of masters of vessels, on file in the Secretary's office, to which he has added many interesting biographical and notes.

We trust that Mr. Rupp will be amply rewarded for his toil and care, and that the descendants of those sires who perished among the wilds of Pennsylvania, will procure the work for themselves."—*Harrisburg Telegraph*.

His work will be of great interest and value to the descendants of those immigrants."—*Inland Daily, Lancaster, Pa.*

the plan of the proposed work and its design cannot fail to be highly acceptable to the public; it will be exceedingly interesting and should have an immense sale in Lancaster county."—*Lancaster Intelligencer*.

the work will be interesting to thousands of persons, who, we feel confident, will make early application."—*Hunting-*
don.

will no doubt prove an interesting, and, it may be in many instances, a very serviceable publication, especially to those are the descendants of these early immigrants. On looking at the specimen number issued, we were grieved to find as of our own ancestors amongst the earliest of the immigrants."—*German Reformed Messenger*.

will be a curious collection and may be of *pecuniary value to many*."—*Lancaster Chronicle*.

the descendants of the early German and other settlers of this State, will be enabled from this *Publication* to ascertain of their arrival, and other facts that may be of value; and will certainly be interesting. Mr. Rupp has given much to the early history of Pennsylvania, and he is fully qualified for the labor he has undertaken. He deserves to be encouraged."—*Evening Bulletin, Philadelphia*.

2-149



